

FREE GIFT COUPONS GIVEN INSIDE

Boys' 2D Magazine

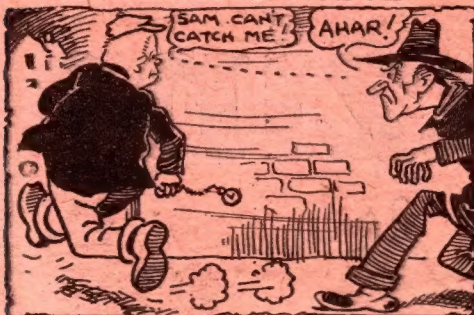
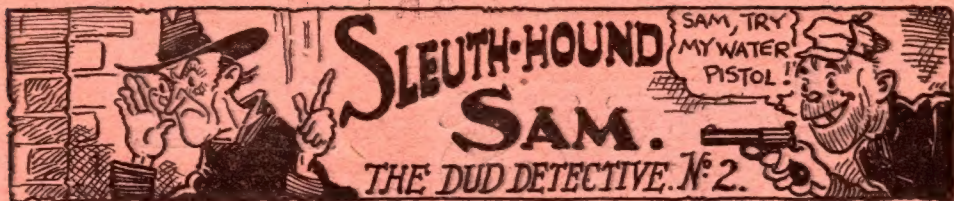
EVERY SATURDAY



VAMPIRES IN TERRORLAND—Eerie Mystery Tale Within

VOL. XX—No. 522—March 5, 1932

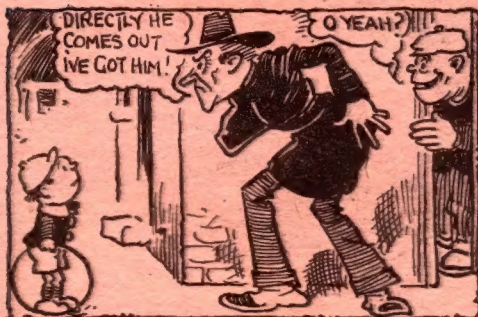
REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION
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The Pickpocket was making a getaway, while Sam was sleuthing him in his best professional manner.



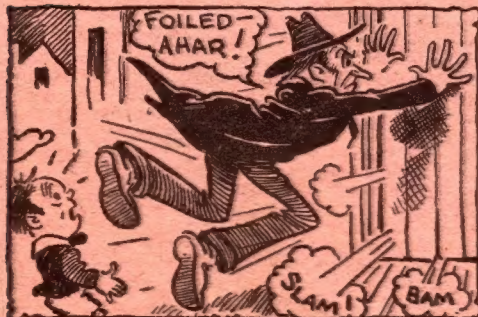
And Sam got to the corner in time to see the fairy feet of Percy disappearing into a doorway.



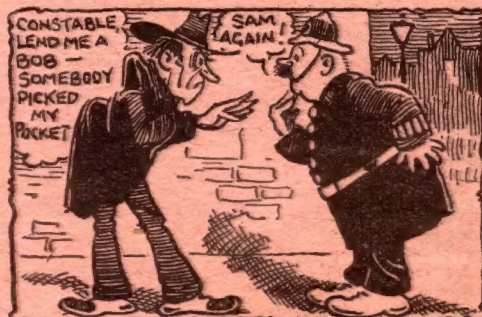
So Sam kept watch on the door, but Percy had ripped through the house, and came out of the back door to see if Sam was doing the job properly.



And, seeing that Sam was intent on the front door, thought he might as well get busy on Sam's pocket while he wasn't noticing.



And when Wee Willie drew attention to the fact, Sam made one leap at the back gate just as Percy slammed it in his face.



But he didn't like having to confess to the constable on the beat! Foiled again! But wait until next week. Ahar!

CROSSED FINGERS MEANS PAX
BUT CROSS-EYE MALONE MEANS

WAR!

Gripping Long Complete
Tale of the Fighting
Lumberjacks.

"CROSS-EYE MALONE" THE SECOND SIGHT SLOGGER



Meet Cross-Eye Malone!
He Seems a Pink and White
Baby but He's a Holy
Terror with his Fists!
This Grand Complete Tale
Tells How The Second
Sight Slogger Comes Up
Against Rene la Paix—
Toughest Breed in the
White Northland.

Boss Hagen Gets a Letter.

"CAN ye beat it! Can ye best it, I ask!"
Boss Hagen was stamping backwards and forwards in his little office at Fort Smith, on the Slave River, kicking over tables and chairs and telling the world what he thought of it.

His two clerks kept their heads well bent over their desks. Boss wasn't a bad chief, but when he was in a rage it was best not to catch his eye.

"Can ye beat it?" he roared again, flourishing a crumpled letter. It was from the head office of the Hudson Trading Company in Winnipeg, and this is what it said:

Dear Hagen,—We are depending on you, as usual, to get the Great Bear trade. There should be a special supply of fine pelts this year after the severe winter. Your remarks about La Paix have been noted. We are sending a young gentleman—Laurence Malone is his name—to take his place. He should arrive almost as soon as this letter. He has had no ex-

perience of Arctic work, but we think he will make good. Yours sincerely, J. B. SCOTT, Secretary.

P.S.—Mr. Malone is rather sensitive about his eyes, and we hope you will see that there is no ragging.—J.B.S.

Boss threw the letter on the floor and jumped on it with both feet.

"I write an' ask them to send me a man, an' they write back an' say they're sendin' a young gentleman that's sensitive about his eyes an' has no experience o' Arctic work. I've got to see the boys don't rag him. Can ye best it?"

As chief of the Hudson Co.'s post at Fort Smith, Boss was responsible for half-a-dozen expeditions to the Far North to buy up the winter's catch of furs from the Indian and Eskimo trappers. This year, for the first time in his life, he was in a fix.

His best trader, a half-breed called René la Paix, who had led the Great Bear expedition for several

All the characters in the stories printed in this paper are fictitious, the names do not refer to any living person or persons.

years, had deserted to an Assyrian called Sacha Istrati, who was sending out a rival expedition.

He was a reckless, fighting, drinking, gambling rogue, that half-breed. But he did know his job. He knew better than any man alive how to get the trading scows up the dangerous Bear River and how to get pelts from the trappers. Mostly with the help of a blackjack—but Boss didn't know that.

He was made of iron-steel. And he was as brutal as he was strong. Brutality was his way of getting things done. And it succeeded, more or less.

"An' they're sendin' me a young gentleman that's sensitive about his eyes," moaned Boss again.

"What the tarnation thunder's wrong wi' his eyes, anyways?"

As if in answer to his question a gentle tap came at the door and the handle softly turned. A round, pink face poked through, and a timid voice said: "May I come in?"

The stranger slipped in, and stood bashfully twirling his hat in front of him. "Mr. Hagen, I presume?" he said, making a low bow.

"No, not me—there's Boss," promptly replied the first clerk, taking the words out of the mouth of the second clerk, who was also going to reply. It took them a few seconds to realise that the stranger had addressed his question neither to the one nor to the other, but to Boss himself—that his eyes were squint.

And what a squint! Those eyes seemed to be looking all ways at once, besides up and down. Large, sea-green eyes they were, reflecting the light like a panther's, and set in a pink, innocent-looking face. Yellow hair, hard and thick like the bristles of a boar, stood up on his head. He was young—a mere kid, not more than twenty-one or twenty-two—about the middle size, with long arms hanging down almost to his knees, and a queer, soft, cat-like way of moving about.

But the only things you really noticed about him were his baby cheeks and his squint eyes. Those eyes . . .

"I'm Laurence Malone. Mr. Scott said you'd be expecting me!"

Boss Hagen collapsed on a chair, feebly mopping his brow. Scott's letter had prepared him for a surprise—but nothing quite so bad as this!

Boss Takes the Count.

"I DOUBT Mr. Scott's sent ye here by mistake," Boss said kindly enough. "What we wanted was a man to take our scows up to the Great Bear, an' do the tradin' wi' the Injuns."

"Yes, I know. My knowledge of Yellowknife, Cree, Chipewyan and Chinook will come in very useful," replied the youngster complacently.

"Yer what?" gasped Boss.

"My knowledge of these dialects will come in rather useful, I think. The natives like to be spoken to in their own language," the kid repeated.

"Jest fancy! Is there anythin' else ye know?" spluttered Boss sarcastically.

The youngster's eyes seemed to take a squint round all the points of the compass, and he rubbed a smooth chin reflectively.

"Well . . . I was once a salesman in a big Chicago store. And—and—I can cook a little—I was an assistant cook in a big hotel; my omelettes were highly recommended. And . . . oh, yes . . . I can box a little. I learned to box in school. Mr. Scott thought my qualifications were just what you needed here."

Boss thought of René la Paix, and groaned.

"See here, sonny," he said earnestly. "Take my advice an' run away home. This is no place for the likes o' you. We're a rough crowd here. The man

ye've been sent to compete agin is René la Paix—an' he don't need to jabber no Injun to get pelts or sail scows. He don't need no cookin', neither—he kin eat nails, Paix can! An' all the boxin' he knows is how to get his man down an' stamp his face into the ground—or slit him open wi' his couteau croquet! Ye get me?"

The kid blinked, as if he was trying to hold back tears. "I—I'm under a contract with Mr. Scott," he stammered. "When do I have to start?"

"Start!" Boss jumped two feet into the air. "Are ye plumb mad? I tell ye that 'breed'll eat ye if ye start tradin' agin him at the Great Bear. He'll eat ye whole, squint eyes an' all, he'll . . ."

Wham! Slam! Boss had no time for more. At the very mention of the word "squint" he got it. A left hook to the body and a right to the chin. Vicious blows, with tigerish power behind them. Boss went spinning right across the office, and collapsed in a heap in the waste-paper basket.

"I . . . I'm sorry . . . I'm so sorry . . ." faltered the kid, hurrying forward and helping the dazed trader to his feet. "You . . . you see . . . I don't like people to refer to my little misfortune, and my temper sometimes gets the better of me. I'm so sorry . . ."

The two clerks shuddered, expecting to see red murder in the office. But with a great effort Boss controlled himself. It might be as much as his job was worth to smash up this youngster whom the secretary of the Company had selected for a special mission.

"If . . . If you would give me a few tips about the business, I'm sure it would be a great help to me," suggested the kid timidly.

Shrugging his shoulders, Boss reached for his hat. "Your blood be on your own head!" he growled. "Don't say I didn't warn ye. Come on down to the river an' look the scows over."

Half-way to the door he paused. "See here, sonny, don't you run away wi' the idea that ye can hit Bill Hagen twice an' get away wi' it . . . get me!"

DOWN on the river there was a scene of feverish activity. A crowd of Indians, urged on by a giant half-breed, who fairly seemed to crackle with energy, was loading great bales of trade goods on half-a-dozen flat-bottomed scows.

That half-breed was René la Paix.

The ice had already moved down the river. La Paix was in a hurry to get on the move.

He suddenly whirled on an Indian who was fumbling with a lashing. He whipped him up in his arms, high above his head, and pitched him clean into the middle of the icy river.

"Needs a ducky'n' to wake heem up, by gar!" he bawled. "Dat's de way me deal wid lazybones—me, René la Paix, de bes' riverman in de whole Nort!"

A fat chuckle of approval came from behind him. "That's the way to deal with the vermin, René. You know how to set about things, you do! Nearly ready to start?"

It was the breed's Assyrian master, Sacha Istrati, who was better known to the police of half-a-dozen American cities as Slippery Sam. But no one at Fort Smith knew that.

He drew the breed aside and whispered earnestly in his ear. "You're going to have a rival after all," he said. "A new Hudson man has just arrived from Winnipeg."

"Bah!" snarled La Paix. "Me know how to deal wid rivals."

"You won't have much trouble with this one," chuckled Slippery Sam. "He's just a baby. Give

him a black look or two if he gets the length of the Bear and he'll run home crying for his mammy."

The breed threw back his head and laughed loudly. He knew what his boss meant by a "black look or two."

"But see here . . ." He tapped the breed on the shoulder with a podgy forefinger, and his voice dropped to a mere whisper. "I know you can carry the thing off your own bat, but I'm not leaving anything to chance. I've got word from a scout of mine at Fort Confidence that the catch of furs this year is the biggest on record. Now, this is what I've done . . ."

He drew closer still, and whispered his plans into the breed's ear. La Paix roared with laughter.

"Sa-ash!" warned the Assyrian. "Here comes that fool Hagen! That's your rival with him. Take a good look at him; perhaps you'll never see him again."

The breed took one contemptuous look at Kid Malone. With a coarse jest to Slippery Sam, he turned on his heel and swung himself into the leading scow. Everything was now ready to start, and he gave the order to cast off. With brown lug-sails bellying in the gentle breeze, the train of flatboats moved slowly down the river.

La Paix flourished his blackjack, and blew a mocking kiss to Boss Hagen.

"Goo'-bye, M'sieu Hagen," he bawled. "You no sorry you quarrel wid René la Paix, no? Your frien' heem buy pelt for you, eh? Heem eyes lak one cat gone mad, mon dieu! Goo'-bye, li'l man! Goo'-bye, M'sieu Squeent Eye!"

Kid Malone swallowed hard, but said nothing. Boss Hagen was watching him closely.

"He's yellow!" he thought to himself. "The sight o' that breed at close quarters is bringin' his heart into his mouth. Scott must ha' gone mad to send him here!"

"When do I start!" asked the kid quietly, blinking as if to keep back tears.

"Not until mornin'," replied Hagen gloomily.

Slippery Sam's Plot.

THE following morning, just as Kid Malone was about to set out on his journey, Boss Hagen came racing down to the river bank flourishing a piece of paper in his hand.

"Can ye explain this?" he asked grimly, thrusting it into the kid's hand.

The slip of paper had been pushed under his office door during the night, and this is how it read:

Watch your Great Bear man. He's double-crossing you. He's as crooked as his eyes. Istrati is paying

him twice the money you are to make a mess of the trip.—A FRIEND.

Boss glared at him, and a torrent of abuse spluttered from his tongue.

"Ye rotten little squirt. I've a good mind to smash every bone in your body!" The kid listened quietly for a minute or two. Then, with squint eyes nervously moving around, he held up his hand.

"Boss Hagen," he said softly. "You're a fool. Don't you see the whole thing's a plant. It's a trick to delay your expedition."

"Maybe it is an' maybe it isn't," growled Boss. "Ye'd best come back to the office wi' me. I'll find someone else to do the job. I'm takin' no chances."

"I'm under contract to do this job, and I'm going to do it," said the kid. "Here, you . . ." He beckoned to one of the clerks who was standing gaping at the scene. "... I'm making a bet with your fool of a boss, and you can hold the stakes. Here's sixty dollars—all I've got on me. I'll give you an I.O.U. for the fifteen hundred dollars Mr. Scott promised me for this trip. And I'll give you a cheque for four thousand dollars—all I've got in the bank. Now then, Mister Hagen, I'll bet you all that against a five-dollar note that I'll make a success of this trip. There's a bet for you—and if I don't win, why, I don't make any money out of it, that's clear!"



THE BREED'S BREAKFAST!
—With a roar La Paix rushed at Malone. The Kid stepped neatly aside, and with a twist of his wrist sent the hot omelette into the bully's face.

Hagen glowered. There seemed no sense in the kid making such a bet if he wasn't on the square. It was a fool bet, of course, but . . .

"All right," he snapped. "I'll take ye up . . . but remember this, if there's any dirty work ye not only lose your money but I'll smash every bone in your body when I see ye again. Is that clear?"

"I'll do my best," Malone said, and shortly afterwards he set out with his six scows and Indian crew.

That same evening a message came through from Fort Resolution saying that one scow had gone over the falls below the Fort—a total loss.

The next afternoon Boss Hagen got another

message saying that a second scow had sunk in the Great Slave Lake!

"I knew it . . . I knew it!" he roared. "Why did I let him go after that warnin' I received. A man wi' eyes like that can't be straight. He's wreckin' them scows deliberately!"

He turned on his clerk—the one who was holding the stakes. "Get that cheque cleared. We'll maybe get a few dollars off him to set against the loss, anyways."

He then sat down and wrote what he called "a real shorter" of a letter to J. B. Scott, disclaiming all responsibility for anything that might happen.

Disaster at Bear River.

KID MALONE had started badly with a vengeance! The news Boss Hagen received was quite true. When the kid arrived at Fort Norman, on the Mackenzie River, he had only four scows left.

But the biggest blow was still to come!

A few miles past Fort Norman, they turned up the Bear River, which leads to the tremendous lake of the same name. The Bear is a brute of a river.

Even in the height of summer it is lined with tremendous ice-cliffs. The only way to get boats up is by means of tump lines. A long cable is stretched from the leading scow to the shore. The crew attach themselves to the cable by means of short tump lines, and haul the boats up against the foaming river by sheer brute strength.

Before tackling the Bear, Kid Malone ordered his boats to the bank. His boyish face was grim. He knew very well that the scows were not lost by accident. After the second boat had sunk, one of the crew, a shifty-looking Copper Indian, had deserted. The Kid was convinced that that man had done the dirty work—bribed by Slippery Sam.

The Kid gathered the crew round him, and made a speech—short and to the point. The gist of it was that they were going up the Bear in a hurry, and any man who didn't fancy the job could go home.

"Now then—who wants to go home, without pay?" he asked quietly.

Not a man moved. They were quite pleased with the trip, and with their leader. They were being decently treated for once. They didn't work on the dried, salted cod, eked out with flapjacks and milkless, sugarless coffee, which La Paix gave his men. They were being well fed, and their backs were not aching from blows with a blackjack, as they would have been if La Paix had been in charge of the trip.

"We'll go then!" said Kid Malone. And they did. Those Indians went into their work like heroes. Sweat pouring off them, every muscle in their bodies straining, they dragged the flatboats north and north. They waded waist-deep through icy water; climbed over rocks and headlands and through scattered trees; pulling, pulling, pulling for dear life . . .

On and on they went, half-maddened by the swarms of vicious bull-flies which stung through their shirts. Their torn feet left a bloody trail behind them on the rocks. Inch by inch, foot by foot, they fought their way north against the foaming current in an epic piece of futile, wasted labour . . .

Wasted, because, when they seemed to have won through, with only a mile or two to go, they met disaster, swift and relentless. Slippery Sam had still another card to play . . .

High up on the top of the ice-cliffs René la Paix awaited the approach of the Hudson crew. Directly the train of scows was underneath him, he levered over a pile of ice-covered boulders with his blackjack, and sent them crashing down to the river.

Boom! Boom! Boom! With a roar like the bursting of a howitzer shell, the avalanche descended. A huge boulder struck the third scow fairly in the

middle. A fountain of water rose fifty feet in the air. The limbs of the men on the tump lines were almost torn from their sockets. Those at the end of the cable were tossed into the water like corks. The others were thrown on their faces on the rocks, where they clung, limpet-like, with bleeding fingers and toes.

Two scows cracked up like so much matchwood, and went rushing away in fragments. Great bales of valuable trade goods were swirled off by the swift current—gone beyond hope of recovery!

Peering over the top of the cliff, René la Paix saw the success of his plot. "Dey no trade wid In'juns, not much now, by gar!" he grunted. Keeping well out of sight of the men below, he raced off back to his camp on the shores of the Great Bear.

In that moment of disaster, Kid Malone showed the stuff that was in him. In a dozen Indian dialects, he rallied his scared crew, cursing them, cajoling, threatening, pleading. And they rallied to a man at the call of their leader.

In a burst of heroic, gruelling labour, they got the two remaining scows head-on to the current, hauled their half-drowned comrades out of the water, and fought their way through the dreaded cliffs.

Fair Exchange . . .

BUT Kid Malone was now in the soup with a vengeance! He couldn't hope to get enough pelts for them to pay the expenses of the trip!

When they were safely through the cliffs and into the long, flat stretch of country leading up to the delta of the Great Bear, he called a halt. "Have any of you ever seen anything like this before?" he asked, holding up a stump of wood.

A dozen voices at once identified it. It was the stump of René la Paix's blackjack. Most of them had felt it on their backs at one time or another.

When the breed levered over the boulders at the top of the cliff, his blackjack had snapped in the middle, and the broken end went slithering down the cliffs straight to Kid Malone's feet.

He slipped it into his pocket with a pleased smile. He didn't need any proof that his troubles were caused by Slippery Sam and his gang, but it was as well to be sure.

"Now then, boys," he said. "We're properly up against it, but I've got a plan. I think it'll work if you'll back me up. Do you think you can hold your own with La Paix's crew if it comes to a fight?"

"Yes!" came the answer without hesitation, and one man ventured the opinion that the breed's crew wouldn't be in a fit state for fighting, as La Paix always gave his men a terrible time going up the Bear.

"Well, here's my plan. You can leave the breed to me. He's stupid, and I think I can hold my own with him if you boys will see that his crew doesn't interfere."

In a few words he explained what was in his mind. His plan was so audacious that the Indians shuddered, and started to make excited protests. La Paix, they said, would kill him if he ventured on such an exploit.

Kid Malone grinned. "Maybe he will—but if the plan comes off I promise you all double pay for the trip. How does that appeal to you?"

There was only one answer to that, of course. They rested for an hour or two, and when nightfall approached they set out on the last lap of their journey.

The trappers had not yet arrived at the lake with their winter's catch, and La Paix had not bothered to unload his scows. They were lying in a row against the left bank of the river near the entrance to the lake. The breed had pitched camp on a dry patch of rising ground half-a-mile away. Only one

man was left to guard the flatboats. Unsuspecting danger, this sentry was loudly snoring in the leading scow when the Hudson boats approached with lug-sails set.

When his two boats came alongside, Kid Malone slipped into the third of La Paix's scows, unfastened the cable attaching it to the second, and jumped back to the last of his own boats with the cable in his hand.

The result was that when they moved upstream they dragged with them four of La Paix's boats, all heavily laden with trade goods. Kid Malone had once more a train of six scows, while La Paix was left with two!

"Fair exchange is no robbery!" said the Kid. "They've wrecked four of our scows for their amusement, and now we get four of theirs. That's fair enough, isn't it?"

The Indians agreed that it was fair enough—but they shuddered to think what the breed would do when he discovered his loss.

La Paix didn't discover it till morning. When the sentry woke up and found that four of his scows were gone, he got the fright of his life. He didn't dare to go and tell La Paix. Instead, he took to his heels, and made for home with all possible speed, leaving the breed to find out for himself.

When he did find out he could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes. Bawling dreadful threats against Cross-Eye Malone, he tramped furiously to the Hudson camp, which the Kid had pitched half-a-mile round the east side of the lake.

He was sitting on a log in front of his tent cooking himself an omelette when La Paix appeared on the scene. The breed could scarcely speak for rage.

"What for you steal my boat for, you, eh?" he bawled.

"Oh, Mister Paix—you're making a mistake, I assure you," said the Kid with an innocent smile. "I wouldn't dream of stealing your boats. You wrecked my boats, you know, and I was sure you would want to make good the damage. So I just took the scows with me to save you the trouble of bringing them round yourself."

He pointed to the broken blackjack dangling on La Paix's wrist.

"I've got the other bit of that," he said. "If you don't mind me saying so, you're a dirty dog, Mister Paix—nearly as dirty as your master, only you haven't his brains."

The breed's bloodshot eyes nearly started from his head. "Me keel you wid de bare hand!" he snarled.

"Hush, hush, little one!" murmured the Kid, giving a toss to his omelette. He was deliberately working La Paix into a passion. "Hush, hush, Mister Paix—Mister Peace. That's what your name means—Man of Peace! Paix is the French for Peace. Just the same as in Chinook, and..."



THE DANGER RAPIDS.—Suddenly a huge boulder came down from above, to crash on to the third scow. It was crushed like an egg-shell, and the men on the lines were flung into the water.

With an inarticulate roar the breed sprang, red murder in his eyes. The Kid slipped from his log like a flash, dodged the rush, and buried his omelette full in the madman's face. . . .

The hot, sloshy mess got into his eyes and ears and mouth and nostrils. It stuck to his whiskers and hair and dripped on to his naked chest. It was pretty hot, and stung just enough to make the breed dance!

"I hope you like my omelette," said the Kid, placidly. "It is made from a copy-right recipe!"

THE scene that followed beggars description. La Paix stood there roaring like a bull, knocking the mess out of his eyes. When he got them cleared he whirled on the Kid.

"Me wring your neck, Squeent-Eye. Me ...!" He had no time for more. The Kid was on him like a panther. A hard fist smacked on his eye and another on his nose—smacks that hurt more than the breed had been hurt for many a day.

"I don't like people to make rude remarks about my eyes," said Kid Malone. "If you do it again I shall have to hit you really hard!"

"Squeent-Eye . . . Squeent-Eye . . . Squeent-Eye!" roared La Paix. Lowering his head he charged, with his big maulers of fists whirling like the sails of a windmill.

And then the hushed crowd of Indians saw something they had never seen before—something they were never likely to see again. An exhibition of scientific slaughter, of cool, merciless fighting by a man who picked out just the most vulnerable points in his opponent's anatomy and hit them—hit them hard, with unerring aim, not only once but again and again!

For that meek-looking Kid could box. His foot-work was as light as a ballet-dancer's. He could

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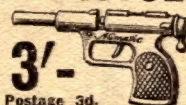
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manoeuvre like a flea, in no space at all. He ducked and dodged and side-stepped, and all the time kept on hitting, hitting, picking out the weak spots and letting fly at them again and again, till the breed began to wince and cover up, all his attacking fury spent, . . .

And then it was slaughter. Kid Malone waded into him with a cold ferocity that made the Indians shiver. His squint eyes made him the most deceptive fighter who ever punched an opponent. He hit to the chin when his eyes seemed to be looking at the stomach. He hit to the stomach when his eyes seemed to be looking at the chin. He dodged one way when you were sure by his eyes he was going the other way. He hit, hit, hit, even when he seemed to be looking round his own shoulder!

And so the end came at last—mercifully for La Paix. A right swing that started from the level of the thigh, delivered with a bent body—a body that straightened like a bow whose string has been cut as the fist travelled upwards. It crashed on the breed's chin with a dull thud, like an axe biting into a log of wood . . .

La Paix's sprawled forward on his face on the turf.

The bully of the Northland . . . the man of iron . . . had met his match at last! A mere kid had beaten him to a frazzle!

* * * * *

KID MALONE promptly commandeered the two scows remaining to La Paix, and he did a roaring trade with the trappers when they at last appeared out of the wilderness with their furs. He stayed on the Great Bear till the very last moment,

and when he set sail for home, just in time to avoid being frozen up, his eight scows were piled to the skies with valuable furs—the greatest haul the Hudson Trading Company ever received from the Great Bear . . .

Boss Hagen could scarcely believe his eyes when, one cold afternoon, he saw the eight scows coming up the Slave River, with Kid Malone perched in the leading one, high on top of a bale of pelts, his babyish face wreathed in smiles.

Boss picked up a letter from his desk and read it through again. It was Scott's reply to his protest. This is what it said:

Dear Hagen,—Yours of April 15th to hand. We don't think you need worry about Mr. Malone. He was highly recommended to us, or of course we would not have selected him. He is known here as the Fighting Salesman. They say he could make a fortune in the ring if he cared to lule up boxing seriously. We thought he was just the man to hold his own with La Paix. Of course, if he doesn't turn up before the freeze-up you must send out a search party. Yours sincerely,

J. B. SCOTT.

P.S.—I warned you, didn't I, that Mr. Malone is rather sensitive about his eyes?—J.B.S.

Boss put the letter away with a dazed look in his eyes.

"The Fightin' Salesman—I send him away wi' six scows an' he comes back wi' eight, all packed to the ceilin' wi' pelts. Can ye beat it, can ye beat it, I ask!"

What Slippery Sam said when he heard the news can't be printed! He blustered and threatened and claimed the full cargo of furs, but when Kid Malone, who had heard of him when he was working in Chicago, quietly reminded him of a little swindle for which he was wanted by the Chicago police, he was glad enough to accept the generous price Boss Hagen offered him for two scows-worth of goods, and to slip quietly away. His plot had recoiled on his own head, and he knew he hadn't a leg to stand on if he tried to appeal to the Law.

"Ye'll come again next year?" said Boss anxiously to Kid Malone, when everything was happily settled.

"Maybe I will," the Fighting Fur Trader promised.

Another Grand Free Gift Book coming next week, chaps. Look out for "Armies of the Ages," with a special Redskin Section.

JOIN THE B.M. REDSKIN LEAGUE

Send Membership Form, Three Coupons and Stamped Addressed Envelope to **THE CHIEF, B.M. LEAGUE, 196, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.** A Ripping Badge and Code Book are sent Free to Every Member.

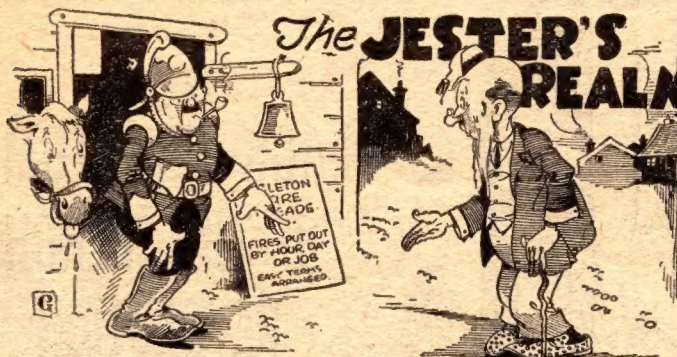
B.M. LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP FORM

I, (name) enclose three coupons and stamped addressed envelope for membership of above. I am of British birth and promise to adhere to tenets and objects. (5/3/32)

BOYS' MAGAZINE LEAGUE COUPON.

Boys' Magazine, 5/3/32.

ALL JOKES PRINTED WIN RIPPING PRIZES FOR SENDERS!



Football and Fountain Pens awarded to senders of jokes on this page. Send your favourite joke on p.c., with coupon on page 21, to the Editor, "Boys' Magazine," 196, Gray's Inn Rd., London, W.C.1.

Absent-minded Old Gent: Could you direct me to the nearest fire-alarm, please? My house is on fire, and I want to call you up!
(Football to D. WARREN, Kernick Farm, Mabe, Cornwall.)

MONEY'S WORTH.

SCOT (to photographer): I see ye have in ye're window a notice saying that ye will enlarge a snap tae life-size for five shillings?

PHOTOGRAPHER: Yes, sir; any snap life-size for five shillings. Best value you can get anywhere!

SCOT: Good! Here's a wee snap o' the Berengaria. When shall I call for a life-size enlargement?

(Fountain pen to ARTHUR SCOTT, 2, Messines Lines, Bulford Camp, Wilts.)

HARD.

DINER: What sort of pie is this?

WAITER: Cottage pie, sir.

DINER: Then this must be the foundation stone I've got.

(Fountain pen to REG BUTCHER, 48, Westbourne Street, Hove, Sussex.)

HIS PART.

STAGE-MANAGER: Mr. Brown, you are taking the part of Alfonso in my new play.

MR. BROWN: Do you think I'll please the public?

STAGE-MANAGER: Certainly; you die in the first act.

(Fountain pen to R. R. LANGLEY, Holland House School, St. Michael's Hall, Hove, Sussex.)

BEFITTING.

LADY (to Tramp): I've given you an old waistcoat of my husband's and you are back again!

TRAMP: Thanks, marm, but the weskit's a bit baggy, and if you 'ave a little meat and pudding left from the governor's dinner, it would just fill it out to fit!

(Fountain pen to J. LUSTIN, 645, Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey, Manchester.)

A RACE.

There was a young porter of Crewe, Who thought he could beat the 2-2.

The remains of this duffer

Were found on the buffer—

I think the train beat him, don't you?

(Fountain pen to Master P. NEWELL, Elm Cottage, Weybourne Lane, near Farnham, Surrey.)

PAINFUL.

"In short, ladies and gentlemen," said an over-powered orator, "I can only say—I beg leave to add I desire to say that I wish I had a window in my bosom so that you might see the emotions of my heart!"

VULGAR BOY: Wouldn't a pane in your stomach do?

(Fountain pen to BROAD, 4, Angle Street, Quigney, East London, S. Africa.)

BY JOVE!

IMMACULATE FOR (to Taxi-driver): I say, laddie, can you take a joke?

TAXI-DRIVER: Yes; where do you want to go?

(Fountain pen to G. T. VINCENT, 8, Leigh Road, Walsall, Staffs.)

WELL STATED!

TEACHER: What State is Chicago in?

BOY: Awful, sir!

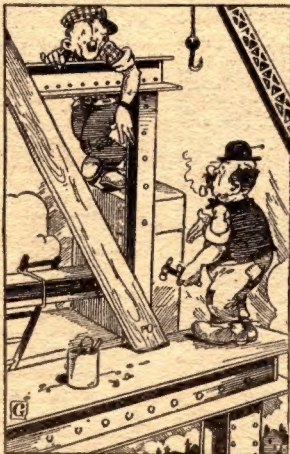
(Fountain pen to VICTOR BEVIS, 29, Southfield Road, Middlesbrough, Yorks.)

FULFILMENT.

FIRST TRAMP: 'Ave any of your childhood ambitions bin fulfilled, Bert?

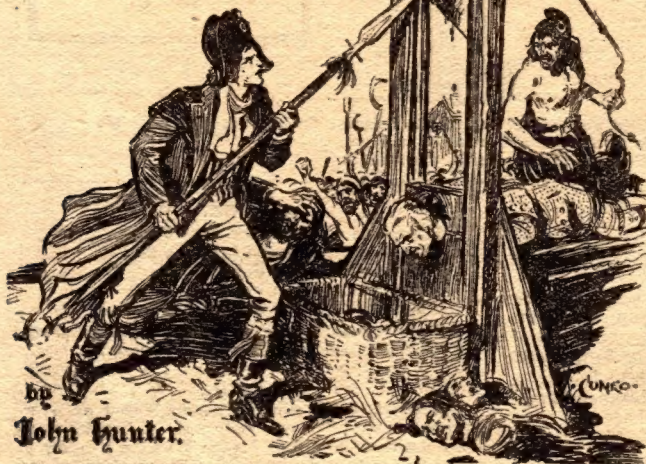
SECOND TRAMP: Only one of 'em. I allus wanted ter wear long trousers, and now I bet I wear 'em longer than anyone!

(Fountain pen to NORMAN, 30, Conisboro' Avenue, Caversham, Reading.)



NICK CHANCE— Guillotine Gambler!

Another Dazzling Exploit
of the Terror of the French
Revolution Crammed with
Thrills and Excitement.



John Hunter.

THE blood-stained hand of terror lay heavy over France.

The mob, ground down for centuries, had at last turned like a wounded monster at bay and was busy trampling the lilies of the most despotic monarchy the world has ever known. The gleaming knife of Madame La Guillotine rose and fell, rose and fell—as into her dreadful maw the flower of France walked, head erect, a careless jest on the lip—yet awed by a sense of calamity and doom!

And then, when the Terror seemed to have reached its blackest hue, a white ray of hope illumined the night. A name was whispered, the name of one careless dare-devil who snatched her prey from the very steps of the guillotine—the Black Phantom.

Aristocrat after aristocrat doomed to the Knife was saved and smuggled into England. Who was he, this gay, laughing enigma who defied the People?

The Vicomte de Belceaux was among those rescued, but he refused to go to England till he had found where his son, the Marquis de Saint Gervain, was imprisoned. His son had not been executed because he and his father alone knew the hiding-place of the famous Belceaux emeralds—and Robespierre and his colleagues were not above cupidity.

A spy of St. Just found where the Vicomte was hidden, little guessing that the young peasant who had been his companion was sometimes known as the exquisite Englishman, Nick Chance, and at others as—the Black Phantom! He tortured him to his death—but before dying, the old man whispered the secret.

The spy went to St. Just, but Nick was there

JOHN HUNTER'S Mightiest
Epic Tale of Drama!

THE BLACK PHANTOM OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Laughing Debonair Nick
Chance in Action!

before the spy could speak. Dressed as the Black Phantom, he took him before the eyes of his master, and ran from the hue and cry, to be faced, round the first corner, by a party of soldiers.

The End of the Spy.

NICK'S swift thoughts told him that even when he stood below the guillotine he had been in no greater danger than this since he landed in France.

He still wore the silken outfit of the Black Phantom. That alone was sufficient to cause him to be slain without question or mercy.

He dared not leave Lepin with the soldiers and take to his heels, else the secret and the emeralds were lost. There were four soldiers and a sergeant, and the sergeant was momentarily winded by the impact of Lepin's head with his solar plexus, and was sitting in the road uttering loud moans. Nick put the sole of his boot on his face and pushed him backwards, at the same time whipping out his sword.

"*Fantôme! Fantôme!*" One of the soldiers, a raw lad from the Argonne, was shrieking it and tending to run away. He thought he had struck some monster from another world.

But the other three closed in and Nick's sword leapt out and back and one of them came silently to his knees and face while the others skipped out of the way of the blade like lightning.

Nick still had hold of Lepin, and he now charged with this fellow direct at the surviving two soldiers. The country lad was running down the street, and it is to be hoped that he was not afterwards guillotined for cowardice.

The pursuit from St. Just's house now swung the corner and Nick's case was desperate. One of the soldiers had pulled out a long horse pistol and he fired it as Nick moved.

Nick, through his grip of Lepin's arm, distinctly felt Lepin's body shock under the impact of the great ball. Lepin fell forward, and it needed but a swift and flashing glance at him to show that the Vicomte's secret was safe with him. For Lepin was dead.

Anger at his heart, Nick stabbed at the man with the pistol, pinked him in the shoulder, and, as the second soldier rushed in, ducked sideways and escaped the sweeping blow of the musket butt.

He tripped him across an out-thrust leg and ran, with the hunt in full cry but now with not so much chance of securing him. In fact, they lost him in the winding ways, and, taking advantage of this, he slipped into a pitch-dark opening and stripping off the dangerous black silk, made his way swiftly to the miser's house.

The Phantom Rides an Errand.

THE days passed. The blind miser's house afforded Nick an excellent shelter. His master never knew how he was dressed nor what he was like. Of days, a roughly clad country boy would go boldly from the front door for such shopping as the house needed. At nights a silk-clad exquisite would sometimes sit and chat with the blind man; and other nights, a slim black silken figure would slide forth on errands against the Republic.

The name and the notoriety of the Black Phantom increased and spread all across Paris. Constant watch was kept for him. His "run" was searched for far and wide, but never found, for nobody suspected the country lad who served the old blind miser.

The miser himself was satisfied. He trusted Nick completely, and found his trust justified. Nick had the safest hiding place in Paris always open to him.

But all this time Nick thought and thought of the Marquis de Gervain. He felt that he owed it to the Vicomte's memory that he should continue the search during the prosecution of which the old aristocrat had lost his life. He would, if humanly possible, find Gervain and the emeralds and ship them both to England with the ever increasing stream of refugees who crossed the narrow seas bearing the mandate of the Black Phantom.

It was chance which threw him on the trail, the chance of a deed essayed and of a great peril faced. It came about in an ordinary fashion. Down the road from the miser's house was a bistro to which Nick occasionally, in his capacity of a country boy relative of the miser's, would repair of an evening and drink red wine and listen to the talk.

He did this deliberately. He did not wish to be a mystery in the neighbourhood. He wanted to be open about himself—the simple gaping country fellow, who stammered and got frightened when spoken to, who was a bit afraid of his miser uncle, but must work for him because his father in Normandy thought good money might come of it at the uncle's death, and so on.

So Nick was down at the bistro one night when two men entered. They were dark and

sombre men in great cocked hats, with cloaks about them, and they had an air of command which brought the landlord to instant attention upon their wants.

The only vacant bench was hard by Nick who, with a mug of red wine before him, was sitting gaping at the company. The two men shot a hard glance at him and then at the landlord. Nick wriggled and grinned idiotically. The landlord significantly, and with a smile, tapped his forehead. The men dropped to the bench, and, turning towards each other, shutting out Nick and the rest of the company, began to talk quietly.

Nick sipped his red wine. Now and again he cried an entirely foolish observation to a red-faced man opposite him, and the red-faced man grunted and told him to be quiet. He allowed a sly fellow with a thimble and a pea to take a few sous from him, and nearly burst into tears when he failed to find the pea.

And the two men talked on, not heeding the semi-idiot at their side. Nick took more red wine and boastfully displayed what he considered a vast sum of money—about six shillings worth, in those days. He bought the red-faced man wine, and tried to get him to talk, knowing that he would refuse. This effort dispelled altogether from the minds of the two dark and secret fellows any idea that Nick might be listening, or understanding if he did listen.

At last they went, those two dark and secret men.

THE ASSASSINS FOILED.—Berand and his bullies pressed hard, but could not get through Nick's flickering defence. The exquisite backed to a table, leapt to it, and fenced down at his opponents.



and Nick stayed on. He insisted on singing an old country song, and the company enjoyed it, for they said he was drunk. They jeered at him and made a fool of him. Then they threw him out and he lurched home with three little boys at his heels yelling insults and throwing things at him.

To the miser he said: "Master, I have served you well. And now I hear that my sister, at Beauvais, is ill and asks for me. If I were away from Paris three days, would you be angry with me?"

The miser grunted, hesitated; and consented. But only for three days.

That night, and temporarily, the drunken idiot who was chased by little boys and thrown from the bistro, vanished.

The Black Phantom rode out of Paris.

At the Chateau.

CLERMONT-EN-ARGONNE yet stands in the shadows of the Argonne, on the edge of that wild and picturesque country, wood-swathed and hill-girt, which is France's eastern border. The wild and winding, rising and falling, hill road is to this day little altered from the days when Nick rode eastward from Paris.

He rode without fear. He had created his excuse for not being seen for three days. He would tell all at the bistro that his uncle, the miser, had "gated" him for three days because he got drunk. Nick thought of more details than many folk.

The Chateau of Quinzain stood outside Clermont, and was a wild and lonely place enough. Originally built by a robber count in the days of du Guesclin, it had been modernised by successive owners, but yet retained the grimness of the mediæval fortress upon the interior comfort of the great French chateau.

The Counts of Quinzain had always treated their tenantry more than well. The result of this was that those at the Chateau of Quinzain found themselves unmolested. They tacitly made no claim on their lands and tenants. Thus their income vanished. But, on the other hand, their tenants did not act aggressively towards them. All that happened was that the overlordship of those at the chateau ceased. This was not uncommon in the less rabid districts of France.

On this particular night two people sat in the great oaken dining-room of the chateau. There was a wild wind striding through the hills, and the massed black pines were beating and dipping beneath it like the ocean, crashing and rustling, with the wind's voice yelling eerily through trunk and branch, and whipping and whistling at the bluff stone corners of the chateau.

The two were an old man, bent and shaky, and a little lad. There was a mark of tragedy on the lad. He had been born to be Count de Quintain. At the age of seven—he was now fourteen—he had been given his first lesson in riding. He had been thrown and his hip broken, and the rough surgery of those days had left him an almost helpless cripple who must drag himself about with a crutch.

The old man, his grandfather, lifted his head and listened. "Your father is late," he said. "If he travels from Paris, he travels slowly. 'Twas a mistake to go to Paris, Michel. He has many foes there. Here, the folk only remember that he was a good seigneur. There, many will recall that he was a friend of Louis."

"He went to help a friend, grandfather," said Michel. He was a brave boy with a brave face. His withered leg hung limply over the edge of his great carven chair. He was busy, his food long since finished, playing chess against himself, moving the huge ivory pieces from square to square.

"Such a night," mumbled the old seigneur. "I remember . . . forty . . . fifty . . . years ago . . . when the wild hillmen came down on us and we lit the great brazier on the tower-top." He chuckled. "It has stood there for centuries, Michel, the beacon warning of the Quinzains, stood there since this chateau was one of du Guesclin's outposts against the hordes beyond the hills. And it's always ready to be lighted."

Michel knew this was so. The old seigneur himself, now that no servants trod the corridors of the chateau, daily attended to the mighty brazier on its twelve-foot tripod, daily saw that it was fed with resined wood, ready to be lighted. It was a tradition. That was all.

Who, of those two, could tell that the brazier waited for the night, so near, when once again it would be lighted?

Michel was uneasy. He moved his white king into the black bishop's check, so abstracted was he; moved it out again, and moved the white knight so that the black bishop could take it.

The white knight . . . moving . . . so that the black bishop could take it. . . Michel shuddered. Was this an omen?

The mighty bell at the chateau's massive front door clanged like Death's own voice in the vast and empty place.

Michel stared at his grandfather. "Father would not have to ring," he gasped. "Who calls on such a night and at such an hour?"

The old seigneur heaved himself in his chair. "I'll go and see."

"I'll come with you," said Michel.

The bell clanged again. They made their way along the stone corridors, the seigneur carrying a lantern, leaning lightly on the shoulder of the boy with his crutch and his swinging leg; and they flung back the great bolts and pulled gently inwards the massive studded door.

Three men were outside, big, with cocked hats across their heads, with cloaks drawn up to their chins. They pushed inside.

"Messieurs—" began the old seigneur.

"In the name of the People," said one of the men curtly. "Shut that door. The wind comes in like a sword-blade."

Hurriedly, with a crash, the great door shut out the wind and the driving rain. The old seigneur was dignified. "This is an intrusion, messieurs, and I demand an explanation."

"You'll get it," said the leader curtly. "Where can we talk?"

"Here," said the seigneur, just as curtly. The big man looked him over. "I command you, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, to show us to a room. It will be better so."

Michel plucked at his grandfather's sleeve, and they all went back to the great dining-room. Michel's heart dragged in its beating. Where was his father? Where was his father?

In the room the three men threw off their cloaks and tossed their hats to chairs.

"We want wine," said the leader. "Fetch it." The old seigneur looked straight at him. "My hospitality is reserved for my friends," he said.

They laughed at this, coarsely and suddenly, and they took wine from the big sideboard, and fine glasses bearing the arms of the house, and they filled them, emptied them, and filled them again.

One of them looked at Michel's chessboard and picked up one of the massive pieces.

"Here's a fine set," he said. "Worth a lot of money, eh? But kings are out-of-date." He swept the board clear, with a brush of his hand.

Michel, with a cry, ran to pick the pieces up. The man shot out his foot and knocked the stooping boy over. Michel crawled away, recovered his crutch, and pulled himself up.

"Now," said the leader, "we want Quinzain—Raoul de Quinzain. This boy's father, I suppose. I heard he had a son. Do you know me?"

The seigneur was by now appreciating immense danger, but his fine spirit never failed.

The seigneur's eyes darkened. "No man has given me the lie without steel to back it. I . . ."

"Grandfather . . ." sobbed Michel. Berand leaned forward, across the table, and, with a blow of his hand knocked the old man out of his chair. Michel hobbled to him and tried to help him up. The old man was dazed from the blow, and just managed to get into his chair without utterly collapsing.

Berand said to Michel: "Come here." The boy



DEATH OF A SPY.—Nick rushed, pushing his captive before him. A shot rang out, and the spy fell to his knees.

"No, nor wish to," he said sharply.

The man scowled. "Then think. Hast never heard of Berand?"

Into the seigneur's age-dimmed eyes crept a light of memory. "Jacques Berand," he repeated. "I know you. You are he whom my son thrashed publicly nearly ten years ago for an assault too brutal to be talked about here. He preferred that to charging you in the courts. Why . . . yes . . . your cheek yet bears the weal of his whip."

Berand nodded, showing wolf's teeth. "Aye. I have remembered. I thought him fled, like the rest. I thought that now the hour of the people—my hour—had struck, he had eluded me. Chance told me he yet lived here. I saw him in Paris, and learnt it by talk. I could have betrayed him there, but chose my own way. I summoned this man"—indicating one of the fellows with him—"and paid him to aid me. He found a friend. We rode after Quinzain to-night, but lost him on the Paris road somewhere. We thought him ahead of us. Where is he?"

"He has not returned," said the seigneur.

Berand sipped at his wine. His two ruffians sat and said nothing. Berand suddenly snarled: "You lie. He's hidden here."

hesitated, and then bravely stepped forward on his crutch. When he was close Berand shot out a great hand and clutched him and flung him to the table top, his hand at his throat.

Across him, while poor Michel struggled futilely, Berand snarled: "Now. The father. Where is he? Else I choke this boy to death."

And the door of the room opened suddenly and silently.

The Fight.

A MAN stood in the doorway, and from him a delicate perfume drifted across the room. Tall and slim, white-handed, he held a jewelled quizzing glass before his eyes, presenting to the sudden stares of those at the table a shimmering picture of light green silk, of frothing lace at wrists and throat, of a yellow silken waistcoat most delicately flowered. His face was powdered, after the fashion of Versailles, with a black spot beneath his left eye, and his white wig was perfectly fitting and close about his handsome head.

He drawled: "Your pardon. I rode by, and sought shelter. Somebody had forgotten to bolt your front

door, so I walked in and left my cloak and hat in your most admirable hall."

His glass turned slowly with his head.

"A most singular procedure," he drawled. "Art cannibals? Dost propose to eat the boy for dinner? Or am I interrupting an ancient rite? Pray proceed. Forgive my intrusion."

The quizzing glass fell to the end of its silken cord, and a jewelled snuffbox appeared in a delicate hand, was tapped with some ceremony, opened, and snuff was daintily applied to each arched nostril. A perfumed, lace-edged handkerchief dusted it away from the priceless Mechlin lace at the exquisite's throat.

Berand exploded. "Who are you?" The snuffbox was deliberately put away. The quizzing glass was lifted. A pair of coldly inquiring eyes surveyed Berand as though he were a strange animal.

"I, monsieur . . . to you . . . am Monseigneur le Duc de Tout le Monde. And you . . . ?"

Berand drew back from Michel and stood up to the fullness of his great height.

Michel wriggled over the table edge. He fell as he did this, quite heavily, but he did not cry out. He got hold of his crutch and hobbled away. The face of the exquisite did not change at this pitiful sight. He stood and smiled at Berand; but the smile held something cold and terrible like a naked sword blade flashing under a dim winter sun.

"Have done," said Berand. "I represent the People."

"I have always pitted the people," drawled the man at the door. "But pray go on. I find you amusing. As good as the play, damme. And you so brainless looking."

Berand choked. Michel began to hobble towards the stranger, his brave little face alight. Berand snarled: "Stand still, boy."

"But no," said the exquisite in a velvet voice. "The boy shall do what he wishes. Come along, my boy. What is it?"

"They seek my father," panted Michel. "If you have ridden the Paris road, monsieur, have you seen a lone horseman? He should have been here by now."

"You mean Raoul de Quinzain? He will not be home to-night," said the exquisite.

There was silence at this calm and amazing announcement. The seigneur, recovering himself, cried: "How know you that, monsieur?"

"Because," said the exquisite, "I met him on the Paris road and warned him."

Michel uttered a low glad cry. How this stranger knew of his father's peril he could not guess; but he spoke with such assurance, Quinzain's absence confirmed his statement so well, that Michel believed him.

Berand gasped. Their journey had been so secret, he thought. There seemed to be magic in this man's knowledge. He forgot that the first man he had hired had been deputed to hire a second man, and that that second man had been hired, and the matter explained to him in a small Parisian bistro near to a blind miser's house on a bench where sat an idiot lad.

Now Berand did some quick thinking. He had travelled far for his vengeance. He roared: "Swords!"

Three blades flashed in the candle light. Three men moved as one round the table. And the long slim rapier which had already slain men showed as Nick, his quizzing glass dropped, moved to meet the attack.

Michel cried: "They'll kill him! They'll kill him!"

The three men rushed at Nick and Nick went sideways, playing them, smiling, talking softly as was his wont.

"When animals use the weapons of men it goes hard with them. Tooth and claw, my friends, for you. Ah . . ." One of the men who had talked in the bistro went back, pinked in the left arm, but yet able to fight.

Nick cannoned a chair, knocked it flying, slipped. They came at him with a yell as he went to one knee. He fought them, fencing like lightning, beating them back, and found his feet.

The seigneur seemed to have forgotten the immense danger of it all. He sat and stared and mumbled: "Good fencing, monsieur. Good swordplay. As good as I've ever seen. Though there was de Briault, to be sure, in fifty-eight, who fought . . ."

Back went Nick, seeking a chance for that long blade to leap at a bared throat. After him came Berand and the others, teeth bared, eyes aflame.

They beat him to the table. He leapt to it, standing amid the glasses, fighting down at them.

"Have at you, animals. You'll not live to see the sun rise. Hey . . . Berand . . ."

He stabbed, missed, as Berand, with frantic effort, flung himself backwards. Nick recovered. Beat off a stroke, laughed again.

Berand panted: "Quinzain's hiding near, eh?"

"Aye. Near—and yet far enough from you. Fight on, brave hearts. What . . . tiring . . . ? And the game but started?"

"Near . . ." panted Berand; and his eyes lit. It was done ere Nick could prevent it. Berand drew back while his comrades yet fought, and snatched at a cushion on a heavy chair. He threw it. It hit Nick in the face.

Berand was at the door. He picked up Michel in one great arm.

"Come on!" he roared. The others, half-heartedly pressing at Nick as he recovered from the cushion's blow, needed no second bidding to get away from that swift sword.

They turned and ran. Nick dropped from the table and rushed to the door. It slammed in his face and he heard the heavy key turn.

The room was silent. Yet, outside it, they heard the cry of Michel.

"Monsieur. Monsieur. Save me!"

"Aye," panted Nick; and looked at the massive door. "Monsieur. Is there any other way from this room? Some secret passage, perhaps?"

The seigneur turned, holding his bruised, dazed head. And then: "No, monsieur, there is no way out save through that door."

UP the great stairway went Michel, carried by Berand, with the two panting ruffians behind them.

"Where to?" panted one of them.

"I'll show you," grinned Berand. "I know this place. I know these people. Thrashed me, he did, with a whip. I swore I'd have my revenge."

They climbed winding stone steps, and they reached a great door which Berand pushed open so that they came to the wind-throated top of the ancient tower in the shadow of the great brazier.

"See?" chuckled Berand in maniac fashion. "That tells the Quinzains of danger. It has told them of danger through the centuries. He'll be watching the chateau, watching close. He'll see the danger signal, and he'll know all the danger when his only son is thrown atop of the flames. See it clearly . . ."

He checked and cried: "Light the brazier's fire, Pierre. Light it, I say."

Is Nick's rescue plan to go astray—is there any way of stopping the terrible vengeance of Berand? The scorching instalment next week tells of thrills galore.

THE BOYS OF ST. GIDDY'S—The Mystery of the Missing Schoolboy!

**Oswald Keeps It Up.**

"A NY news of Oswald!" Johnny Gee, the cheery skipper of the Remove, was standing on the School House steps of St. Giddy's with his chums, when an anxious voice made that inquiry.

He turned, and saw Greene and Prinsep, looking pale and worried.

Johnny Gee shook his head.

"No," he replied. "Nothing has been heard of Oswald since he left the school at tea-time yesterday."

Greene and Prinsep gasped. Frank Oswald, their chum, who shared Study No. 14 in the Remove with them, had disappeared from St. Giddy's after leaving the school on his own at tea-time yesterday! The whole of St. Giddy's was buzzing with excitement over the affair. The general impression was, that Oswald had met with foul play.

There was a gang of desperate crooks operating in the neighbourhood of Merivale. The boys of St. Giddy's had already had thrilling adventures with the Red Car Bandits, as they were called.

Everyone feared that Oswald must have fallen a victim to these desperadoes.

One reason strongly supporting this conclusion, was the fact that Oswald's father had recently become a millionaire, through a fortunate deal on the Stock Exchange.

Only Greene and Prinsep were aware of the true facts of the case. Oswald had walked out of St. Giddy's yesterday with the deliberate intention of not returning until his father paid a "ransom" for him.

His father's suddenly becoming a millionaire had filled Oswald with a craze for "doing the grand" like Davenport and Forthergill & Co., the knuts of

The Boy who Caused his Own Kidnapping Learns his Lesson! All's Well that Ends Well in This Gripping Human Interest Yarn Featuring Oswald of the Remove.

the Upper Fourth. Taking for granted that his father would now pamper him with unlimited cash, Oswald had incurred an overwhelming number of debts. Then his father had sprung a bombshell on him. Oswald was to have no more than his usual allowance! So the

boy had resolved to play this reckless trick on his father, rather than suffer humiliation and be the laughing-stock of the school.

Greene and Prinsep whom he had taken into his confidence, had done their best to turn him from his purpose, but the reckless junior, in sheer desperation, had gone his way. He had left St. Giddy's without a word, after making his studymates promise not to give him away.

The sheer nerve and audacity of Oswald's ruse left them appalled and fearful of the results for the foolhardy junior when the true facts came out.

At that juncture, Buttons, the school page, came out of the Hall door, to announce that the Head wanted Johnny Gee, Greene and Prinsep in his study at once.

Dr. Holroyd regarded the juniors gravely as they came in answer to the summons. The Head's kind, venerable face was lined with care and anxiety.

"I wish to speak to you lads concerning Oswald, who has disappeared from this school," he said in a serious tone. "I have just been rung up on the telephone by his father. This morning, Mr. Oswald received a letter, posted from Merivale last night and signed by the Red Car Bandits. It stated that Oswald was in their hands, and he would not be released until a sum of fifty pounds was paid over to his captors."

Johnny Gee & Co. looked at the Head in amazement. Greene and Prinsep gasped.

"It is very strange," said Dr. Holroyd, "that such a small sum as fifty pounds should be demanded, considering that Mr. Oswald is a millionaire, and criminals of the Red Car Bandit type would undoubtedly have aimed at a much larger sum—thousands of pounds, most probably."

Greene and Prinsep darted scared glances at one another. Here, indeed, was a weakness in Oswald's plan. He had had nerve enough to kidnap himself, but he had not dared to attempt to extort more than fifty pounds from his father.

"We are at a loss to know quite what to make of this matter," said Dr. Holroyd. "It is not at all improbable that Mr. Oswald is being made the victim of a daring hoax, yet on the other hand the affair may be more serious than we imagine. Mr. Oswald is very distressed, and he is travelling down here from London this evening, as soon as he can leave his business. Meanwhile, if you lads hear of anything that may throw a light on the mystery, you will report to me at once."

"Very well, sir." The three Removites left the Head's study. Greene and Prinsep went along to Study No. 14.

Greene gave a sudden gasp. "Hallo! Someone's been in here mucking about in the cupboard!"

The study cupboard had been opened, and a parcel containing old clothes used in theatricals was missing! Then Greene discovered a note pinned to the shelf. He and Prinsep read it with wondering eyes. This was how it ran:

Please keep this mum. I have broken in during the night and taken the make-up traps from this cupboard. I need them for the stunt I am working. Will you chaps please meet me in Merivale at six o'clock outside McMurray's Wharf by the river, when we can have a jaw. I rely on you not to give me away.—FRANK OSWALD.

The two Removites were on tenterhooks all day, but apparently Oswald had a good hiding place, for he was not found. Just as dusk was drawing in, Greene and Prinsep left the school and hurried down to Merivale.

Greene and Prinsep waited by the fence, at the appointed meeting-place. Suddenly, a youthful figure, roughly clad and wearing an old cap pulled well down on his head, came up to them in the gloom.

"Hallo, you chaps. So you've come!" said a well-known voice.

"Oswald! You—you duffer! You frabjous ass!" exclaimed Greene breathlessly. "You'll get it in the neck for this!"

"Rats!" said Oswald. "Why should anyone find out? I'm living down here as a working lad, and I've some money left, to keep myself for a few days, at any rate. I've taken a room at No. 18, Water Lane. I mean business, I can tell you! I'll get that money out of my father—the mean old skindint! He's rolling in money, and yet he tries to keep me down—to make me look a fool in front of the whole school! I'm entitled to a share of his fortune, and I mean to have it!"

His chums drew deep breaths. They marvelled at Oswald's nerve. "The Head already smells a rat!" said Prinsep. "No real kidnappers would run the risk of a long term of imprisonment for a mere fifty quid. Fifty thousand would be more their mark! Better chuck this stunt, Oswald, and come back to school. Your pater's on his way down, and—"

He broke off with a gasp of alarm, as a tramp of footsteps sounded on the cobblestones by the river. Johnny Gee & Co. coming!

"Oh, crumbs!" ejaculated Greene. "That's done it! I knew Gee was suspicious—he's been watching us all day. He'll tumble to the whole game now, and—why, what—Yah! Yaroooooh!"

Crash! Oswald seemed to have gone suddenly insane! He doubled his fists and, prencing round his old studymates, he started to hit out at them to right and left.

"Come on!" yelled Oswald, changing his voice to a coarse, truculent tone. "I'll fight both of yer! Cheeky college idjits—that's wot you are! Take that! And that!"

"Yarooooop!" Johnny Gee & Co., seeing Greene and Prinsep apparently in difficulties, came dashing up. The disguised Oswald scuttled off into the back streets of the riverside quarter.

"No use following—we'll lose him in the alleys," said Johnny Gee. "I suppose you two were down here, looking for Oswald?"

"Ye-es," replied Greene, as they made their way back to the High Street.

"So you think the same as we do—that Oswald has run off somewhere on his own accord—that the kidnapping business is all spoo?" said the Remove captain pointedly.

Greene and Prinsep started. "Oh—er—no—I mean yes!" gasped Greene. He coloured awkwardly, and Johnny was quick to notice it. The Remove captain made no comment, however.

The Bandits Again.

THE party of Removites made their way along the Merivale Lane towards St. Giddy's. It was dark now, and they were approaching the narrowest part of the lane, when there was a low, deep roar of a powerful motor. A massive red automobile came swooping round the bend ahead of them.

The Removites had to jump out of the way to avoid being run down. The car thundered past them with a roar, and was gone in a flash.

Johnny Gee caught his breath in alarm. "The Red Car Bandits again!" he exclaimed. "We'd better make for the telephone box at the next corner, ring the police and tell 'em that the rotters are out here again."

The Removites hurried forward and, rounding the bend, they came to the red telephone kiosk in the lane. A motor-car was drawn up beside it and Johnny saw that the telephone was engaged.

The juniors gasped. The car looked as though it had just been in a smash. The front wings and bumpers were dented, there were ugly scratches on the door and side panels.

Johnny stepped towards the telephone box, and as he did so the man who had been 'phoning came staggering out. He was wild-looking and dishevelled. He turned immediately to the juniors.

"You are boys from St. Gideon's?" he exclaimed hoarsely. "My name is Oswald—I have driven down from London to see about my son, who belongs to your school. Did you see that red car that just escaped along the road?"

"Yes—yes—the Red Car Bandits!" gasped Johnny in thrilled tones.

"The rascals held me up in this road—they shot a bullet through the windscreen. I had to drive up the bank and hit a tree. They have stolen my despatch case, containing valuable papers. Without them, I am ruined!"

"Good heavens!" The Removites gazed at the distressed stockbroker in horror and dismay.

"I have just informed the police—but the miscreants have had a good start! What shall I do?" Mr. Oswald groaned. "I suppose there is nothing for me to do but go on to St. Gideon's, and wait the police report."

Johnny Gee & Co. followed the car to St. Giddy's. Greene and Prinsep were gasping with dismay. Oswald's escapade had had more startling con-

sequences than they in their wildest dreams, could have anticipated.

When prep. was over, Johnny Gee & Co. were called to the Head's study. Mr. Oswald was there, his face pale and agitated.

Dr. Holroyd looked searchingly at Johnny. "You have no reason to suspect, Gee, that someone—even Oswald himself—may be playing a practical joke!" he asked. "Mr. Oswald and I are considering that possibility."

"I don't know what to think, sir," replied the Remove captain frankly. "Why should anyone wish to play such a joke? Surely Oswald had no need—"

"My son may have perpetrated this outrage, in a deliberate attempt to obtain money from me!" rapped Mr. Oswald angrily. "I can only hope, for his own sake, that such is the case, for if he really is in the hands of those rogues with the red car, his chances of ransom are very remote. The scoundrels already have the papers which hold all my fortune in the balance."

"We must get the truth without delay!" exclaimed Dr. Holroyd in great agitation. "You say the demand is that you shall deposit fifty pound notes in a packet within the hollow tree in Merivale Wood to-night at eleven? What do you propose to do?"

the centre of the wood, and Mr. Oswald placed a small packet containing sheets of impot paper, inside the dark hole in the tree trunk. Then they all waited tensely in the shadows of the trees.

Long minutes that seemed like hours passed, and then all at once the juniors stiffened with breath-catching excitement.

A stealthy step sounded amongst the bracken, and a dark figure emerged from the dark fastnesses of the wood. It was the form of a man, short and stooping, who approached the tree in a stealthy, fox-like manner. He reached into the hole. . . .

Johnny Gee's voice rang out in a ringing call to his chums, and the Removites and prefects together made a dash towards the marauder of the wood. Next moment he was retreating into the wood, fighting savagely, wielding a heavy cudgel to beat them off.

He turned and ran like a ferret towards the outskirts of the wood. Johnny Gee & Co. gave chase, and they caught the miscreant ere he reached the road. He went down with a crash and an ear-splitting yell.

The Removites piled on top of him. In their excitement, they did not hear the roar of a car that came sweeping along the road, like a red monster in the moonlight.



"Perhaps a dummy packet could be put in, sir, and we could hide in the wood and watch?" said Johnny Gee eagerly. "We know the woods inside and out—my chums and I—and we could go there to-night and watch for the person, whoever he might be, who comes to take the packet from the tree."

"That seems a sensible idea, sir—especially as these lads are acquainted with the wood," said Mr. Oswald.

"I will give permission, Gee, for you and your friends to go out to-night as you suggest, but with Mr. Oswald and three prefects," said Dr. Holroyd.

NIGHT fell over St. Giddy's, and stars glimmered in the purple sky overhead.

Johnny Gee & Co., Mr. Oswald and Wellesley, North and Duncan of the Sixth made their way through Merivale Wood, treading lightly through the undergrowth. They reached the hollow tree in

CAR CROOKS ATTACK.—Suddenly the headlights of a car swept across the struggling group, and the bandits' car came crashing toward them. Johnny and his chums leapt aside.

Suddenly, the dazzling rays of two powerful headlights bored through the darkness into the wood. The red car had turned sharply off the road, and was crashing towards the spot where they had the marauder in their grip.

The juniors scattered before the oncoming vehicle, and in the glare Johnny saw the near side door open, and a man leaned out, snatching up the marauder as the car swept past.

The St. Giddy's party were left staggering amongst the broken trees, dazed and breathless by the suddenness of the attack.

OSWALD, still in disguise, was making his way from the village towards Merivale Wood. He was later than he had intended. He knew the ways and by-ways of the wood intimately, and he took a devious route that brought him at last to the hollow tree in the centre.

Oswald allowed some minutes to elapse, however, ere he ventured out of hiding. He crept to the hollow tree and reached inside. His heart gave a thrilled bound when he felt a small, fat packet reposing in the hole.

"Good!" breathed Oswald. "Then Dad's come to terms! I—"

"Give me that, you scum—give it me!"

Oswald was petrified with fear for a moment as a coarse voice broke out behind him. He turned to run, but he found himself seized in a powerful grasp. The packet was snatched from his hand and even as he writhed in an effort to tear himself away from his masked assailant, a heavy, cruel blow descended on his head and he sank to the ground unconscious.

WHEN Oswald came to he found himself in a dark, low-ceilinged room. He blinked about him bewilderingly. He was lying on some sacks in a corner of the low-raftered room. An oil lamp was burning on a table, and seated round it were a number of men, evil and desperate-looking.

Oswald then realised that his hands and feet were tied with rope. A wave of terror seized him.

"Got your senses back?" sneered one of the men. "We want you to give an account of yourself, my buck! What were you doing in the wood, spying on us—and in disguise? We know who you are, Master Oswald. Now, what's the game—eh? Who told you that the Red Car Bandits used the hollow tree in Merivale Wood for leaving messages and swag to be picked up by different members of the gang?"

Oswald sucked in his breath in amazement. "I know nothing about it!" cried Oswald hoarsely—the knowledge that he was now actually in the hands of the notorious Red Car Bandits struck chill terror and foreboding in his heart. "I wasn't spying on you—I swear it—!" And in frenzied tones he told how he had run away from school and hidden himself in disguise in Merivale, to delude his father into the belief that he had been kidnapped.

The Red Car Bandits looked significantly at one another. At length they rose, all but the foxy-looking rascal known as Snake took their departure, after gagging Oswald.

Snake settled himself in a chair. The kidnapped junior lay on the sacks until at last, overcome by exhaustion, he fell into a heavy, troubled sleep.

It was daylight when he awoke. Snake had gone. An oppressive silence pervaded the place, broken now and then by the distant lapping of water. Oswald realised that he was in a building close by the river.

An hour or more passed, and then he heard a door open below, and there was the sound of men climbing a ladder. A trap-door in the floor was raised, and Snake appeared. He was followed by two other men, and, lastly by the burly ringleader of the gang. Snake at a rapped command from the leader, gave Oswald a jug of cold tea and some bread, which he devoured hungrily.

The chief of the bandits lit a cigar, and stood there regarding the prisoner through the haze of blue smoke. He had a large suitcase which he opened. The gangsters' eyes glistened as they watched their leader examine the contents of the case.

The man gave a grunt and thrust the satchel back

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into the case, with the rest of the booty.

"Five o'clock!" he muttered, consulting his watch. "Time we were off!"

The gangsters climbed down from the loft. The trapdoor shut with a bang, and Oswald was alone again—a prisoner in the Red Bandits' lair.

His heart was thudding wildly now. If only he could escape! No use trying to force those knots!

Suddenly, his searching eyes found a rusty nail sticking through the rotting floor. He wriggled off the sacks, and by painful, snake-like movements he made his way across the floor to it. He pressed his bonds against it, tearing, pulling at the cords, till the rough metal began to fray the fibres.

Strand by strand it was cut through until at last, with a tremendous tug, Oswald was able to snap the rope. His hands were free! A few minutes later he had removed his gag and undone the rope that held his feet.

Oswald ran to the trapdoor, and went down the ladder. He was in the old, disused boathouse along the River Rudd, some two miles beyond Merivale. In front of the large doors he saw tyre-marks and, peering into the other section of the building, he gave a gasp when he saw the dim outline of a red car. So this was where the bandits' car was kept!

His brow wrinkled in a look of puzzlement. How did the bandits get the car into the boathouse? There was no road by which they could have driven to the spot. The river! Somehow, the bandits brought their car to the boathouse from the river. Opposite

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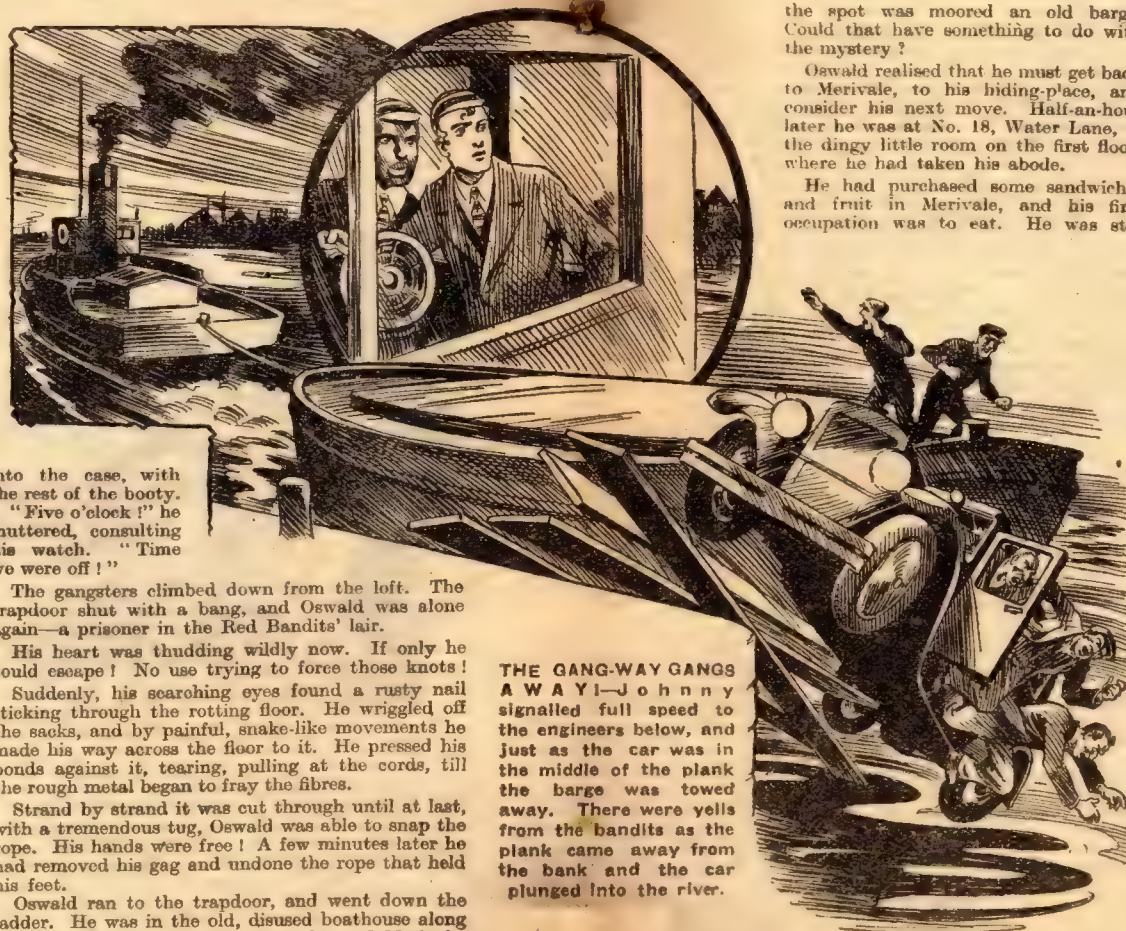
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the spot was moored an old barge. Could that have something to do with the mystery?

Oswald realised that he must get back to Merivale, to his hiding-place, and consider his next move. Half-an-hour later he was at No. 18, Water Lane, in the dingy little room on the first floor, where he had taken his abode.

He had purchased some sandwiches and fruit in Merivale, and his first occupation was to eat. He was still

you. Your father was held up by the Red Car Bandits last night, just before he got to St. Giddy's—"

"Wha-a-a-at!"

"They stopped his car in the Merivale Lane, and took his satchel, containing all the papers he had brought from his office in London. And if he can't get 'em back, he's ruined."

Oswald's face went white. He realised, now, the serious consequences of his foolhardy action. He had fetched his father from London, to be robbed by the Red Car Bandits!

"Oh, crumbs! What a fool I've been!" he muttered. "Dad will never forgive me, if those papers aren't recovered! I—"

"Bang! Crash! Wallop!" He broke off as those loud knockings sounded at the door below. He looked down from the window. Johnny Gee & Co. were crowded on the doorstep.

"Come on, Oswald—let us in!" roared Dick Bannister, who was still performing lustily on the doorknocker. "The game's up, you rotter! We followed Greene and Prinsep from St. Giddy's, and saw 'em admitted here."

"All right!" panted Oswald. "Wait a minute." He rushed downstairs and admitted the chums of the Remove.

"So this is where you've been hanging out, and in disguise!" exclaimed Johnny angrily. "We guessed you were playing a rotten game of spoof, Oswald! Now, we want to know what all this business is about. You know, of course, that your pater's been robbed by the Red Car Bandits and lost everything?"

"Yes," said Oswald miserably. "These chaps have just told me. I—I'm awfully sorry, Gee, I've been a fool—a mad fool. I thought of this wheeze to get the money out of my father. I—I didn't guess that anything like this would happen. But I really have been in the hands of the Red Car Bandits."

"Gammon!"

"It's a fact!" exclaimed Oswald eagerly. He recounted to Johnny Gee & Co. his startling adventure, and how he had escaped from the old boathouse along the river.

"My hat!" gasped Johnny Gee in a low voice. "So that's how it all came about—the hollow tree was used by the bandits for leaving and receiving messages. And you hit on the same spot by accident!"

"They've got all the swag at the boathouse," said Oswald swiftly. "My father's satchel as well!"

"Then we'll go right along there!" said Johnny Gee. He turned to the others eagerly. "Are you chaps game to come with me to raid that giddy boathouse!"

"Rather!" Oswald took off his rough clothing and hastily put on his Etons. Then the party of Removites hurried down to the river.

"We'd better get a boat," said Johnny Gee. "What about Caffeyn? He'd let us have a motor-boat—we'll club together to pay for it."

They rushed to Caffeyn's boathouse, and it was not long before a large motor-boat was surging along the Rudd from Merivale, throwing up showers of white spray from her bows.

Johnny Gee & Co. were out for scalps this time! They soon reached the spot where the old ramshackle boathouse reared its gaunt shape above the trees. Oswald drew a deep breath.

"My hat! The barge that was lying out here is gone!"

"And so have the Red Car Bandits, by the look of things!" said Johnny between his teeth. He swung round the tiller, and the motor-boat swung alongside the bank.

Johnny Gee, Oswald, and Dick Bannister jumped

munching hungrily, when he heard a tap at the front door, and a well-known whistle.

Oswald hurried downstairs and let in Greene and Prinsep. The landlady was out; he was alone in the house. He took his old study-mates upstairs to his own room.

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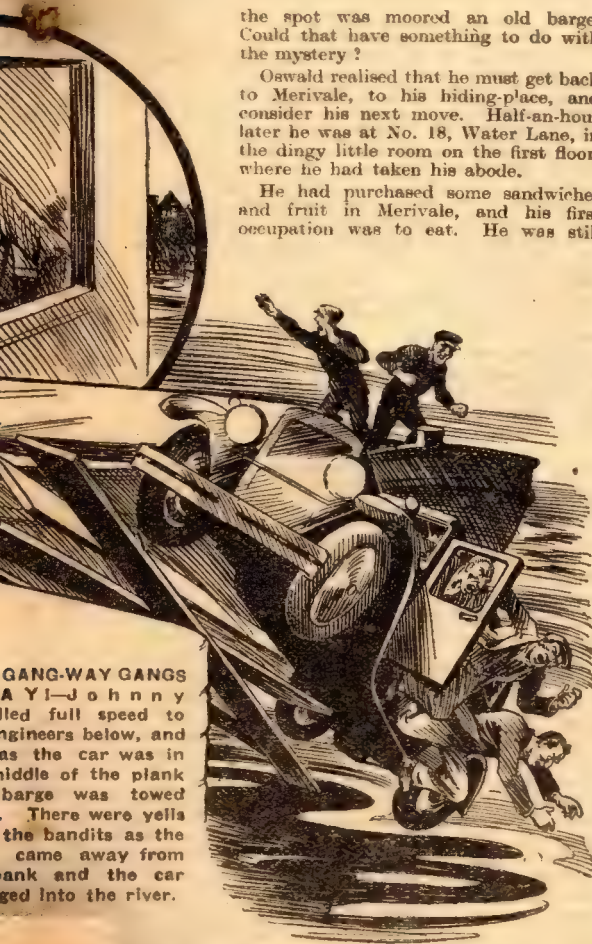
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everything?"

"Yes," said Oswald miserably. "These chaps
have just told me. I—I'm awfully sorry, Gee, I've
been a fool—a mad fool. I thought of this wheeze
to get the money out of my father. I—I didn't guess
that anything like this would happen. But I really
have been in the hands of the Red Car Bandits."

"Gammon!"

"It's a fact!" exclaimed Oswald eagerly. He
recounted to Johnny Gee & Co. his startling adventure,
and how he had escaped from the old boathouse
along the river.

"My hat!" gasped Johnny Gee in a low voice.
"So that's how it all came about—the hollow tree
was used by the bandits for leaving and receiving
messages. And you hit on the same spot by accident!"

"They've got all the swag at the boathouse," said
Oswald swiftly. "My father's satchel as well!"

"Then we'll go right along there!" said Johnny
Gee. He turned to the others eagerly. "Are you
chaps game to come with me to raid that giddy
boathouse!"

"Rather!" Oswald took off his rough clothing
and hastily put on his Etons. Then the party of
Removites hurried down to the river.

"We'd better get a boat," said Johnny Gee.
"What about Caffeyn? He'd let us have a motor-
boat—we'll club together to pay for it."

They rushed to Caffeyn's boathouse, and it was not
long before a large motor-boat was surging along
the Rudd from Merivale, throwing up showers of
white spray from her bows.

Johnny Gee & Co. were out for scalps this time!

They soon reached the spot where the old ram-
shackle boathouse reared its gaunt shape above the
trees. Oswald drew a deep breath.

"My hat! The barge that was lying out here is
gone!"

"And so have the Red Car Bandits, by the look of
things!" said Johnny between his teeth. He swung
round the tiller, and the motor-boat swung alongside
the bank.

Johnny Gee, Oswald, and Dick Bannister jumped

out and ran to the old boathouse. The red car was gone from its hiding place. The bandits, finding that their boy prisoner had escaped, had lost no time in vacating their lair, taking the swag with them!

"The car's been taken away by river," said Johnny. "They've got the car on to the barge somehow, and are towing it. We ought to be able to catch 'em up quickly in our boat. Kim on!"

The juniors went off again at top speed. Rounding the bend in the river, they saw a tug with a barge in tow, running ahead of them.

The tug had drawn in as close as possible to the south bank of the river, and stopped. A tarpaulin was dragged down, revealing a red motor-car. And Johnny Gee & Co. saw men on the barge lowering a gangway to bridge the space between the low-lying craft and the river bank.

Johnny caught his breath. "They're going to run the car off the barge on to the bank, and then get away!"

Johnny swung the boat across to the south bank. "Some of you get off, and if you get a chance, stop the car when it lands!" he said. "I'm going on, to try and stop it landing!"

Dick Bannister, Snowball and the Hon. Bob Vernon elected to go on with Johnny. The others

jumped ashore, and ran along the bank, behind the trees.

Johnny manoeuvred the motor-boat alongside the tug. There were two men visible on the tug—the skipper on the bridge and his mate on deck. The latter came running to the side as the motor-boat drew up, a look of rage and hatred on his face. Dick and Snowball leaped over the rail at him and brought him down in a swift, whirling Rugger tackle.

Crash! They rolled on the deck together. Next minute Johnny Gee and the Hon. Bob Vernon leaped over the side to their comrades' assistance. The captain joined the fight, ham-like fists flying, and tried to beat them back, but went over the head of the companion way, with the four Removites piling on top of him.

They rolled in a bunch under the short flight of steps, into the cabin. The man's head fetched up heavily against the bulkhead, and he went limp, with a moan.

Johnny and his chums sprang up on deck again. They gasped with swift alarm. "The bandits' car had roared into life—it was moving off on to the gangway that spanned the distance between the barge and the river bank."

Johnny's eyes gleamed. With a swift movement, he flung over the engine telegraph to "Full Speed," and in prompt response to the order, which they supposed had been registered by the skipper, the engines below set the engines going fast.

The tug started forward, just as the bandits' car was in the middle of the gangway.

Crash! The driver of the car made a desperate effort to reach the bank ere the gangway was dragged out of position. But too late! Away went the gangway, dropping off into the water. The red car hit the bank and toppled right over into the river.

The bandits, wrenching their way out of the half-submerged car, were floundering about in the water.

Men from a local farm came running up, and Johnny Gee and his chums on the motor-boat kept swooping round, prodding at the unhappy bandits with boat-hooks.

The burly leader of the gang dived under the surface, and they saw the saloon door open. Oswald gave a ringing shout of dismay.

"He's taking the case—Dad's case, containing all his papers."

The bandit started to swim away. Next minute Oswald had dived in, and he swam with swift, desperate strokes in chase of the escaping ruffian.

The bandit snarled at him, as he took a grip on the black satchel and wrenched it away. Next minute the man's fist descended with a crashing blow, on his head. Oswald gave a choking cry of despair, and sank—still clutching his father's satchel.

Dimly he was aware of the bulky shape of his adversary, groping his powerful hands towards him. Then he heard a dull splash, and another form swam down and interposed between them. He felt the strong arms of the new arrival grip him.

It was Johnny Gee who had dived off the boat to Oswald's rescue. He snatched him away from the bandit leader, only just in time. He grasped the satchel as it slipped from Oswald's nerveless fingers. They rose to the surface together. His chums were dealing with the bandit. The other three had been hounded out on to the bank and caught.

It was dark in the sanatorium at St. Giddy's. There were five persons gathered round a bed.

The occupant of the bed stirred, gave a slight moan, and opened his eyes. He looked wildly, wonderingly round him. The tall, grizzled man standing by the head of the bed bent over him, a kindly look in his eyes.

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GREAT FREE GIFT NUMBER OF THE MAG. NEXT WEEK, BOYS. BELOW YOUR EDITOR CHATS ABOUT THE SPLENDID YARNS AND SURPRISES.

YOUR EDITOR'S Stunning Gift next week, Boys!

MY DEAR CHUMS,
It seemed an almost impossible task to make each of the spiffing-Wonder Books given away inside the *Mag.* go one better than the last one! But in the grand 28-page Volume presented next Saturday I think we have succeeded, chaps. You'll miss a big treat if you don't secure

ARMIES OF THE AGES.

This vivid, spectacular Wonder Book is simply crammed from cover to cover with smashing descriptions of the Soldiers and Heroes of the World from earliest history to the present day. It will tell all about badges, weapons, uniforms, famous soldiers, despatch riders, machinery, etc., and there will be a

Special Redskin Section.

This will be of vital interest to every member of the B.M. Redskin League.

And the yarns, chaps. For thrills and excitement they hit the topmost of the High Spots! You'll be held spellbound by the next gripping episode in Terrorland entitled

The Unholy Holocaust!

By a clever ruse Harry Tracey and Bottles penetrate into the secret fastnesses of the garden of ghouls—and what they discover there is described in hair-raising fashion.

Football enthusiasts will welcome another gripping new yarn featuring Iron Foot Andy—the wizard midget who is playing football for a fortune. Bat Fulger, his cousin and rival for his uncle's legacy, will go to any lengths of villainy. Next week he cleverly puts the onus of his latest crime upon the red-haired youngster. And five minutes before the kick-off of an important Cup-tie Andy finds himself

In the Net!

The dramatic way in which he turns the tables is told in a succession of shocks and surprises on the field and off.

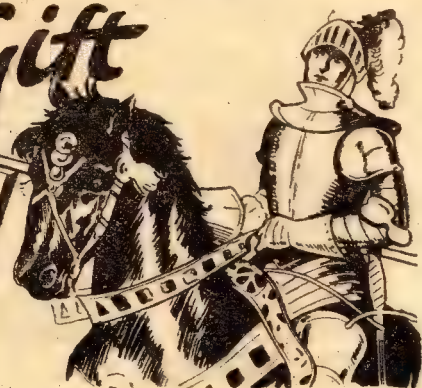
"All right now, Frank?" said Mr. Oswald in a soft tone.

"What—what happened?" said Oswald feebly.

"Dad's papers—were they recovered?"

"Yes, rather, old chap!" chuckled Johnny Geo.

"We nailed all four bandits, and the men on the tug who helped them. The red car was towed out of the water by a lorry, and all the swag was found on board. Your pater knows the whole story—and I didn't forget to tell him how you saved his papers when the boss bandit tried to get away with 'em."



The Boys of St. Giddy's latest doings are particularly apropos to this Special Army Number of the old *Mag.* In uproarious circumstances a body of soldiers clad in full dress uniform come to the old school. The doings of

The Barmy Army at St. Giddy's

will hold you in tucks of mirth to the screaming finale.

JOKE COUPON.

Stick on postcard and send with your favourite joke to the JOKE EDITOR

5/3/32.

Washington Hayseed—Detective.

He's a newcomer to the *Mag.*—but you cannot fail to like him. Yep, sah! Washington's the most comical nigger who ever tried to follow in the foot-prints of Sherlock Holmes, Falcon Swift, and the rest!

The titbit of next week's programme I've saved to the last. Nothing less than a gripping, complete tale telling of the breathless exploits of No. 13—a British Secret Service agent—in China. Look for the title: Nemesis in No Man's Land.

All the Best, Your sincere friend,

The Editor

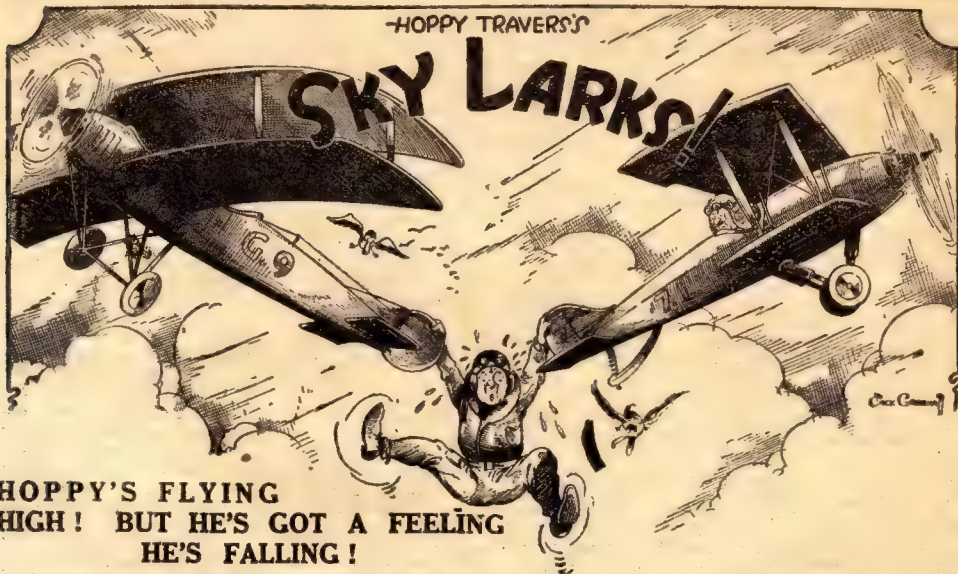
P.S.—Don't forget to tell all your pals about the next stunning Wonder Book "Armies of the Ages" given inside every copy of the *Mag.* Next Week. To make sure you don't miss this treat order your copies in advance.

Two days later, Frank Oswald resumed his old place in the Remove.

Study No. 14 now contained its original "sticks," the nice new furniture having been returned—at Oswald's own wish. Greene and Prinsep had willingly obeyed their chum's wish. Mr. Oswald had settled the debt with Bond of the Sixth. Frank Oswald had learnt his lesson.

Another gripping yarn of the Joyous Juniors next week, chaps. Look out for it—and for the next Free Wonder Book, "Armies of the Ages."

THE KID WITH A COOL | ALL IN | 'Planes for Sale ! 'Cos Sailing a 'Plane
MILLION QUIDLETS ! | THE AIR. | Ain't all Plain Sailing for Hoppy Travers !



HOPPY'S FLYING HIGH ! BUT HE'S GOT A FEELING HE'S FALLING !

"YEP," said Hoppy Travers, Boy Millionaire, "the only part of an aeroplane I can name is the laugh-stick. But I'm jolly interested in aviation and if your invention has a chance of being successful I'm willing to finance it."

Clad in brand new flying leathers and with a crash helmet perched perkily on his head, Hoppy strode on to the fresh green turf of the Crasphem Flying Ground. He addressed his companion, Toddy Weston, the sun-bronzed owner of the Crasphem School of Aviation, and an old friend of the kid with a cool million quid.

"It's not the financing of the thing, so much," Toddy said. "The trouble is that six months ago I borrowed some money on a short-term loan, with the 'drome and all its contents as security. The fellow I borrowed from now threatens to foreclose and turn me out, unless I give him the patent of my invention. But come into the control tower and I'll explain all about it."

He led Hoppy up a flight of steps into a small room at the top of a criss-cross of girders. Through the window Hoppy Travers had a view of the ground and an aeroplane waiting immediately below the window.

Toddy cleared his throat—no doubt he thought it would have to work overtime to explain to a fellow who called a joystick the laugh-stick—and began.

"Since I started running that Flying School, I've learnt a bit about civil aviation and its drawbacks."

"You mean, where it falls down," grinned Hoppy. "Exactly. Now the main cause of accidents is . . ."

"Planes hitting the ground ?"

"Ass ! No, it's 'planes hitting each other !"

"Eh ? How ?"

"Well, it's when they take off. They hit another plane that's coming down."

"But why don't they have a man to wave a red flag, or put up a signal, like they do on the railway ?"

"Well, they do have a man, the Traffic Officer. He sits up in the control tower, and tells the pilot by wireless when all's clear. But accidents happen. Sometimes the engine baulks for a minute, and by that time another machine has come round. Or perhaps he doesn't take off in quite the course he had intended. Then he may hit another machine."

"And can't that be avoided ? Seems a shocking waste of good aeroplanes !"

"It can be avoided, and I've invented the means of doing it !" Toddy's voice sank to an impressive whisper as he finished dramatically : "I've invented wireless control !"

Hoppy looked blank. "B-b-but what good will an apparatus for finding out who isn't paying his wireless licence be on a flying ground ?"

"No, no, I don't mean control of wireless sets," grinned Toddy. "I mean control of a 'plane in the air with or without a pilot ! See"—he pointed to a table on which was a chart of the flying ground and the surrounding country and a number of electric switches—"by working those switches I can launch a specially prepared 'plane into the air without the pilot touching his own controls. In the same way the traffic officer of a busy flying ground can do the same—sending off departing 'planes when he knows the coast is clear."

"They are sent up by means of a catapult apparatus, and then they are controlled by wireless from this cabin till they are five miles away. Thus I can easily prevent collisions."

"Great !" cried Hoppy enthusiastically. "And have you made a working model ?"

"I've got it all done full size !" Toddy assured him. "These switches"—he pointed to a board on the desk—"are the wireless control switches. And this one"—he indicated one on the wall—"lets off the catapult."

He went to the window, and pointed out to the flying field. "There's the catapult out there," he

said. "When the plane is on that white spot pressing this button will project it into the air."

Hoppy could see the catapult apparatus, its lengths of thick elastic fixed to two upright posts in the ground and drawn back taut round a sort of metal clip. The white spot was just in front of this.

Just then a plane came skirling down out of the sky, to land in the middle of the field. From it stepped a villainous-looking figure in a black cloak and hat, with fiercely curled moustache. Toddy gasped when he saw him.

"That's Picol D'Unnonzio!"

"Pickled onions!" exclaimed Hoppy. "Who's he?"

"No, Picol D'Unnonzio," Toddy growled. "That's the chap I borrowed the money from. I must go down and see him. You wait here a minute."

Toddy ran down the stairs of the tower, and out on to the flying field. He found the foreigner examining the catapult apparatus that stood there. Hoppy, looking down, could not hear what was said, but he guessed the trend of the conversation from the threatening look on the moneylender's face.

Toddy was expostulating. The other gesticulated, and for a moment Hoppy thought his chum was going to be attacked. Toddy seemed to think so too, for he backed and almost tripped over the strands of the catapult.

He seemed to be getting the worst of the argument but was keeping his end up well. Hoppy was on the point of going down to see if he could help, when he saw Pickled Onions' hand stealing towards his pocket.

A gun? Hoppy wasn't taking any chances. On a sudden inspiration he reached out and pressed the catapult release button. He heard a sudden *swish* through the window, followed by a startled yell, as the form of the foreigner suddenly went sailing up into the air.

That catapult certainly did work! D'Unnonzio whizzed up and up, in a wide parabola, and Hoppy had a shock as he thought of what would happen when he landed. He would have a body on his hands!

But the flying form didn't land. It dived head first into the wind sock that floated in the breeze at the end of its mast—the long, wide cone of cloth, open both ends, that showed the wind direction to airmen. D'Unnonzio went through the wide end all right—but he was too big for the narrow end, and he stuck there, his legs kicking out of one end and his arms waving wildly through the other.

Hoppy rushed down to the field, and by the time he got there, Pickled Onions had extracted himself from his predicament and was sliding down the pole.

When he reached terra-firma his face was the colour of a beetroot, and his black spiked moustache was bristling with wrath. He gibbered and gesticulated at the Boy Millionaire for two minutes, while Hoppy stood by watching sweetly at his wrath.

"*Sapristi!* Zat you make ze fool of me!" he snarled when he at last recovered the power of speech. "*Santa Maria!* I vill 'ave ze rer-revenge. Unless you pay ze monies you owe me on zis flying-ground, I tak' ze ground!"

And his hand moved to the pocket in which Hoppy thought he kept a gun. Instead, however, he produced a sheaf of blue documents and waved them in Toddy's face.

"What's he jabbering about!" asked Hoppy of his friend.

The young airman looked worried.

"It's the mortgage he holds on the 'drome. Actually to-morrow's the last day on which I can pay it off. If I don't find the money then or give him my invention he says he'll foreclose and take the ground."

"Oh, so that's it, is it?" said Hoppy. "Right, I'll advance the money to-morrow—I haven't got



YOU YOUNG R-R-R-IP!—Picol D'Unnonzio gave an evil chuckle as he slashed at Hoppy's parachute. A great rent appeared, and Hoppy round himself dropping earthward.

my cheque-book with me now—and you can pay me back when you can, Toddy! Now, you can take your hook, Mr. Pickled Onions. You'll get the £ s. d. instead of the invention—to-morrow!"

D'Unnonzio gritted his teeth with a sound like sandpaper. He saw the wonderful invention with which he had hoped to make a fortune slipping from his grasp. His demand for the mortgage money was only a way in which he had hoped to force Toddy to part with the greater prize. But it seemed the intervention of the Boy Millionaire was going to upset his plans. He stalked from the field, turning over a plan of revenge in his fertile foreign mind!

'Plane Sailing—But Only Just.

THE next afternoon the flying field presented an animated scene. Toddy had arranged a big meeting to take place at which his invention was to be tried out before experts. If the demonstration was a success it would only be a matter of weeks before the young flying man began to reap a rich harvest.

Hoppy was going to contribute his share of the work. He was going up to make the test in the machine fitted with automatic and electric controls,

while Toddy directed him from below. Behold him then, clad in gorgeous flying leathers stalking manfully—but with many an inward qualm—to the scene of operations.

As he fitted himself carefully into the cockpit of the machine, which already had its controls set for rising from the ground, Hoppy had certain qualms. But, as Toddy had assured him, every pioneer probably feels the same, and certainly there was no one else to do the job. So Hoppy was making the most of a job that might perhaps turn out to be a bad one.

No more had been seen of the foreign money-lender. He seemed to have disappeared. Anyway, Hoppy had no time to think of him as he sat in the test machine, waiting to be shot into the air.

The world looked a very desirable place as he

looked at the bright green grass under him. He'd be leaving that in a minute—when he came back to it, would it be a gentle or a sudden meeting?

Swooo-o-o-o-o-o—p! Hoppy suddenly had a feeling that his stomach had left him—then he realised that he was in the air. The engine, too, had started at the same moment as he left the ground, and now the machine was climbing steadily with a zooming roar.

Would she fly properly? For a moment Hoppy's heart seemed to stop beating, but then it returned to Business as Usual. The machine seemed as steady as a rock, and was rising higher and higher without a sign of faltering.

Up and up they went, and Hoppy began to enjoy it. He watched the altimeter, showing his height: 1,000 feet, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000—still the 'plane rose.

At a mile high, Hoppy began to find it monotonous. At two miles, it was definitely boring. He wondered why Toddy didn't bring the 'plane back to earth. He must be almost out of sight of the spectators now.

For the sake of something to occupy his time, he began to look around the cockpit. He observed the joystick, and noticed that it was locked firmly in the central position. The throttle controls, too, were fixed—at least, they could not be worked from the cockpit. Toddy and his wireless had full control of them.

Suddenly, he noticed a small piece of paper screwed up on the floor. He picked it up and found it was a note addressed to one of the mechanics, who had not turned up for work that morning. He gasped with horror as he read it.

It ran:

You will tamper with the 'plane so that the wireless control has no effect. Also jamb the joystick. Thus the 'plane will crash sooner or later, apparently proving the invention faulty. And I have the plans in my possession, and can bring it forward as my own invention. For this you receive the agreed sum.

PICOL D'UNSONZIO.

Hoppy went white. He saw now why this machine had been rising all the time. The engine worked all right, and she had taken off successfully. But the wireless control was having no effect!

He looked over the side. The earth seemed a long way down—it was in fact a drop of more than two miles.

"Oh, I wish I had a lifeboat, or something!" Hoppy gasped. "Why couldn't Toddy invent something to save a fellow when a 'plane did crash, instead of trying to prevent crashes? Why..."

He stopped, suddenly remembering. Toddy had put in a parachute for him, in case he wanted it! Good old Toddy, always thinking of everything—even failure!

It took Hoppy about five minutes to put on the parachute, and about five more to decide to jump. Then, as he was about to fling himself over the side, he heard a sound above the engine roar of his own 'plane. Another machine had come up, flying on the other side.

The pilot's goggles hid his identity, but the gesture he made was enough for Hoppy. He was flying in case, and he was beckoning.

The newcomer didn't realise that Hoppy had taken up a parachute with him. And Hoppy forgot it for the moment, too. Better try and cross to the other 'plane than a two-mile drop through space with only a piece of flimsy cloth to depend on!

Hoppy clambered out along his wing, then reached out to grab the wing of the other. He glanced momentarily at the pilot, and then his surprise made him lose his grip. For the other had taken off his goggles, to reveal the sardonic features of Picol Unnanzio!

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Hoppy pressed the button that released the catapult.

Hoppy gave a yell as he felt himself toppling into space. Unnonzio, seeing his predicament, gave his machine a sudden twist away—and as Hoppy toppled he gave a jump, his fingers clutching at the tail—now the nearest part—of the other machine.

He grabbed it and held with one arm. The sudden loss of weight on his own plane caused it to veer suddenly, and he grabbed at that, to catch again the tail assembly.

For a moment he hung there, between the tails of the two machines. Then one of them gave way with a crunch—the crook's plane—and he gave a yell of consternation as he felt himself dropping with sickening speed.

The crook was in some trouble now, too. His tail was gone, and he was unable to control his machine. But he had more experience in the air than Hoppy, and he was cool and purposeful as he climbed over the edge of his cockpit and jumped.

His purpose was soon obvious. Hoppy had pulled the ripcord of his chute and was now floating slowly back to earth; and the villain, carefully controlling his jump, fell straight towards Hoppy.

He opened his chute when he was but twenty feet above the boy. And in his right hand he grasped a huge, curved knife.

Hoppy, of course, could not see this rather ominous fact, for the foreigner was hidden from his sight by the billowing fabric of his parachute. But it was not long before the kid with the cool million quid knew all about it. He was sailing gaily to earth when . . .

R-R-R-Rip! There was a terrific rending sound immediately above his head, and looking up with goggling eyes, he saw a great rent had appeared in the fabric. Through it he saw the great curved knife, the gloating face of D'Unnonzio.

"Peey!" cackled the foreigner triumphantly above the wind. "You will soon be—pork!"

"Yooooop!" answered Hoppy. He didn't exactly mean that; but the sudden uprush of wind as he began to fall like a meteor took his breath away.

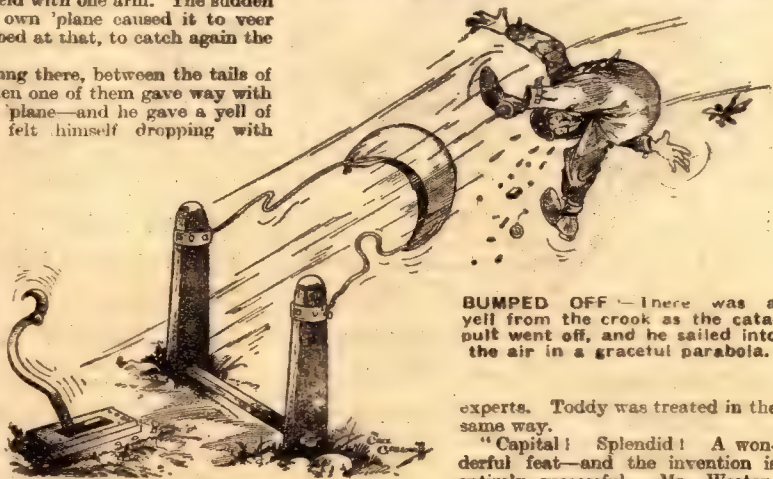
But fortunately for the Boy Millionaire, it was written that he was not to die yet awhile. Hardly had he begun that awful downward drop when a zooming sounded close by, and a winged shape hurtled exactly beneath him. Next moment Hoppy's downward progress finished abruptly as he fell feet first into the cockpit of another aeroplane!

He thought for a moment it must be a dream. But no, there was the "laughstick," the gleaming instruments on the dashboard. He was saved. Seeing the dreadful fate that was about to overtake his youthful patron from the control-tower below, Toddy Weston had sent up another wireless-controlled plane and manoeuvred it so that Hoppy was caught in the cockpit!

There was no necessity for Hoppy to attempt to try his 'prentice hand on the controls. Still under the influence of Toddy's wireless switches in the control-tower on the flying-field, the monoplane glided gently down to terra firma. D'Unnonzio had not reckoned on a spare plane.

As the landing wheels bumped earth and ceased to revolve, a crowd dashed forward, led by the young inventor.

"Hoppy, old tulip, are you okay?" panted Toddy. Before the Boy Millionaire could reply he was dragged from the cockpit and his arm pumped wildly up and down by a number of enthusiastic



BUMPED OFF—There was a yell from the crook as the catapult went off, and he sailed into the air in a graceful parabola.

experts. Toddy was treated in the same way.

"Capital! Splendid! A wonderful feat—and the invention is entirely successful. Mr. Weston, your fortune is made!" sneezed a bearded individual who, according to information whispered by Toddy, Hoppy understood was Something Very Big at the Air Ministry. "There will be no difficulty in getting the British Government to take up the patents. Your fortune is made, Mr. Weston!"

They found Pickled Onions half-an-hour later, when the crowd had departed. The foreign plotter was sitting in the middle of a particularly slimy, though fortunately shallow, duckpond. Into a muddy and unwilling paw Hoppy placed a cheque for the amount of Toddy's mortgage, and there they left him to meditate morosely on his sins.

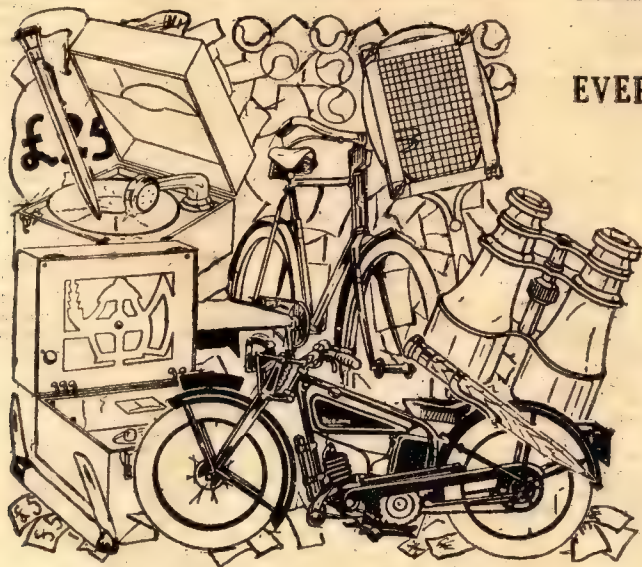
Look out next week for a chortling yarn of a new hero—Washington Hayseed, Detective!

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CAMERAS, &c., &c.**

TO qualify for one of these smashing gifts you simply have to collect coupons. The sixth set of prize coupons will be found on Page 35.

Four popular papers, one for every member of the family, contain prize coupons every week. IDEAS for Father, WEEK END NOVELS for Mother, BETTY'S PAPER for the younger women, BOYS' MAGAZINE for the Boys. Why not tell the members of your family about them, and all join together in pooling coupons for the big prizes?

This contest will continue for fifteen weeks. Watch particularly for special bonus weeks, when an increased number of coupons will be given.

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The First Prize will be awarded to the Reader who collects the Greatest Number of Coupons and the remainder of these Wonderful Gifts will then be awarded in turn to the Next Best in NUMBER. But Remember that EVERY READER who collects All the Coupons from only Three of the above Papers—255 Coupons—is Guaranteed a Valuable Prize.

TURN TO PAGE 35 AND CUT OUT THE SIXTH SET OF FREE GIFT COUPONS. TELL YOUR DAD, MOTHER, BROTHERS, SISTERS AND FRIENDS THERE ARE COUPONS IN IDEAS, WEEK END NOVELS, AND BETTY'S PAPER ALSO.

Harry Tracey and Bottles
Invade the Garden of
Ghouls!

EERIE CREEPY
TALE SERIES!

Telling of Awesome
Adventures in a Strange
Land of Mysteries!

VAMPIRES of TERRORLAND



Vampires of the Night!

"LOOK, Master Harry, there they are again!"

Jim Glass, the boy air mechanic — otherwise known as Bottles — pointed with an uneasy finger.

"Yes, yes, I see," muttered Harry Tracey, breathlessly. Lying flat on a rocky ledge, the two boys had a clear view of the wide, moonlit gully.

It was a scene of wild grandeur, desolate beyond belief; hills and mountains rose in the distance, and nearer at hand, on the opposite slope of the gully, grew black, mysterious clumps of firs.

Standing against the skyline, on a rocky crag, a figure showed clearly for a moment, to be joined by another. Even in the pale radiance of the moon, the boys could see that these fearsome Things had the legs and bodies of men; yet their heads and faces were shaggy, with great pointed ears; and when they raised their arms, they were not arms at all—but web-like wings, with hideous claws at the ends.

"They're vampires—that's what they are!" whispered Bottles shakily. "Coo! See that one do a leap just then? They're after us, Master 'Arry!"

"We'll get back to the cave and tell the Professor," whispered Harry. Bottles was eager enough. He was a plucky young fellow, but this wild, rugged

**Hair-raising Thrills Fast as Film
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Story Series. Each Yarn Quite
Complete.**

country, with its spectral inhabitants, unnerved him.

Worming their way along the dark ledge, the boys slid through a narrow opening in the rock. It

was their place of refuge. After escaping from that dread Terrorland, they had deemed it impossible to reach any village or town. Pursuit would have overtaken them long before they could reach safety.

So they had remained here, fairly close to the mysterious estate of Count Sylvanus von Stelth. Throughout the day they had slept, and now it was night again, and although they were refreshed, the pangs of hunger gnawed at their vitals.

Within the cave they found Professor Warren Kingswood, the old man they had rescued.

"Vampires—bats!" he said bitterly, when they told him. "Don't be fooled, my dear boys. They are men. Do not forget that we are in the Harz Mountains, and the Count's estate is a vast hive of criminal industry."

"But these—these Things were out here, in the hills, beyond the Count's private property," murmured Harry.

"When these Devil Men venture beyond the great walls, they adopt vile disguises," said the Professor, "so that if they are seen by any chance peasants, they will strike terror into the hearts of those simple

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HERE is the fifth set of puzzles for "FOOTBALLERS" Competition No. 2, in which you are given the opportunity of winning one of the excellent prizes set out above.

You will enjoy solving these simple puzzles, each of which represents the name of a football player. Here is a chance for you to compete with your chums in "The Mag.'s" own contest, for which over 200 splendid prizes are offered.

When you have solved this week's pictures you should cut them out and put them away in a safe place until the end of the Competition, when full particulars and closing date will be announced.

Each week a set of six puzzles will appear. Do not send any puzzles in until you have the complete set.

Solutions must be filled in IN INK in the spaces provided on the entry forms.

Only one name must be given under each picture. The decision of the Competition Editor in all matters relating to this competition must be accepted as final. Set No. 6 of this Competition will be published in the Wonder Book presented with the "B.M." next week.

START TO-DAY Twenty-four puzzles have been published in the last four issues of the "Mag." If you didn't get them you can get back copies from the Subscription Dept. "Boys' Magazine" Withy Grove Manchester price 3d. per copy post free.

"FOOTBALLERS" PUZZLE No. 2. FIFTH SET.

The Solutions to this week's Pictures are among the following Footballers' Names:

**BACON
BAKER
BARTON
PARKER
PEACOCK
PRINGLE
SHEARER
SLICER
SMITH
SPIERS
STAGE
STEPHENS
STEPHENSON
TALBOT
TAYLOR**

Save these Puzzles until after the Final Set of Pictures has appeared.



folk. Make no mistake as to what they are doing: they are searching for us."

"Then we'll turn the tables," said Harry, with a sudden grin in his voice. "Are you game, Bottles? We'll hunt the hunters!"

"If they're 'uman, Master 'Arry, like you an' me. I'm game for anything," said Bottles promptly.

The old man would have objected, for he knew the danger better than they, but they did not stay to hear him. They crept out of the cave, the entrance of which was cunningly hidden by rocks. The ledge itself, which straggled along the cliff, was invisible from below. And even above it was hidden by the overhanging crags.

Tired and desperate, the fugitives had been thankful, indeed, when they had found that haven of refuge. Flight would have been folly, for there was no village for many miles.

The two young Britishers were only here by accident, on an adventurous flight from London to Berlin, their plane had been driven out of its course in a great storm, and they had crashed in the very heart of that feudal estate.

The two boys were like shadows as they crept cautiously along the ledge. The moonlight was brilliant, and because of its very brilliance, the shadows were inky black. This ledge, along which Harry and Bottles moved, was hidden in the gloom.

Presently the ledge ended, and Bottles clutched at Harry.

"Look!" he hissed. "Down there!" Far below them the moonlight slanted, and they beheld two of those weird, vampire-like figures.

"By Jove!" muttered Harry, his eyes gleaming. An idea had come to him. He jumped hard upon the treacherous cliff edge, and Bottles instantly followed suit, too bewildered to know what this move meant.

Harry's plan was to slither rapidly to the cliff foot—and to get to grips with those two Creatures.

But something else happened—something unexpected. The loose ground, carrying the boys with it, became a veritable landslide. Stones, pebbles and earth went rolling down, increasing in volume and velocity.

Startled shouts came from the figures below, but before they could dodge, the landslide had caught them. They went sprawling, buried beneath that hurtling mass. Harry and Bottles, arriving a moment later, were unharmed, for they had ridden on the crest of the landslide. With difficulty they dragged the mystery figures out and hauled them behind a great boulder.

With lightning fingers the boys dragged off the headgear and false bat's wings, with the wicked-looking claws. It was a kind of furry dress, all made in one piece.

"The old Professor was right!" whispered Bottles, tensely. "They're only ordinary men—ugly-looking blokes at that!"

One of them was stunned, and the other half-dazed. With deft fingers the boys bound their prisoners, then gagged them.

"Into that head-dress, Bottles—quick!" panted Harry.

And a minute later the two boys, in that weird



ON THE CREST OF CHAOS!—Harry and Bottles slid down in an avalanche of loose stones to crash upon the terrible creatures below.

get-up, were indistinguishable from the original "vampires." And not a second too soon, for they heard the crunch of footsteps, and four more of those Things were upon them.

Into the Unknown.

"NOT a word," hissed Harry warningly. "Leave this to me."

At the first sound of the approaching figures, the boys had emerged from behind the boulder, into the moonlight. And now Harry, in a deep voice, muffled by his headgear, cursed the luck.

"Was geht?" asked one of the newcomers, in German.

"It was a fall all right," growled Harry.

"Sprechen Sie Englisch?" said the other voice. "Ach! You half the accident, yes!"

Harry pointed up the steep cliff.

"Dangerous!" he jerked. "We were nearly buried. Better get away." They hurried off—but Harry was not afraid of another landslide. He was

afraid that these other men would find their bound and gagged companions, behind that boulder.

Harry, who could understand a little German—although he could not speak it sufficiently well to take a risk—gathered that the hunt was over for the moment. They were returning to the estate.

Reaching higher ground, one of the figures paused and uttered a long, piercing wail—a dreadful animal cry. Bottles was so startled that he gasped; but Harry knew that that call was merely a signal, other hunters came up from various directions.

"We waste our time," said the man who was obviously the leader. "The Englishers, they have escaped. But never will they get out of these hills, Soon they will be brought."

The boys found themselves walking towards the great wall. Harry found an opportunity of whispering to his companion.

"Once over the wall, we might be able to get away from these brutes," he breathed. "It's our only chance of grabbing some food—and making some investigations."

"Looks like we're for it, if you ask me," murmured Bottles.

The wall rose before them majestically—a vast stone affair, mossgrown and creeper-covered in many parts, stretching across the hills for miles.

At one point of the wall there was a low, arched doorway—and so thick was the wall itself that the boys found themselves going through a kind of tunnel. There was an ancient wooden gate on the outer side, but a modern reinforced steel door on the inner side.

In a body the searchers went down sloping ground, with Harry and Bottles in their midst. The boys could see the gleam of a lake, far ahead. There were comparatively few trees just here.

In the moonlight, on the other side of the lake, arose the battlements and towers of the feudal castle. Nearer, on the lake shore, stood a modern wooden building, and lights were gleaming from its windows. The soft thudding and humming of machinery beat on the air.

Suddenly the other figures paused, and looked into the sky. A black monoplane, looking like a giant bat, circled slowly overhead. A twinkling green light appeared. The bat-like plane veered off, and two green flashes showed for a moment. But that other green light, hovering in the sky, remained overhead.

It was sinking now, drifting slowly towards the ground. And Harry knew the explanation. A small parachute had been dropped, and the twinkling green light was fixed to it.

A parcel of some kind had been dropped from the air; the object was too small to be a human being. And Harry was seized by an overwhelming curiosity to find out the truth of this new little mystery. Nudging Bottles, he ran.

They broke through a clump of trees, and they pounced on that parcel before any of the others were near. It proved to be a stout canvas bag, and ruthlessly Harry ripped it open with his pocket-knife. Inside, there were two or three other bags of soft cloth, and as Harry cut through one of them, hundreds

of rings poured out upon the ground—gold rings, platinum rings, all of them set with diamonds, rubies, emeralds!

"Lumme!" gurgled Bottles.

"Thought so!" panted Harry. "Loot! The proceeds of robberies! Don't you see, Bottles? They're brought here by 'plane, and dropped—and in that way all trace of them is lost."

Before Bottles could reply a number of black-garbed figures came round, and all of them were wearing grotesque hoods, with saucer-like windows for eyes. One man was dressed in green, instead of black. He, as the boys knew from that previous experience, was a kind of overseer.

"Dogs! What does this mean?" snarled the Green Unknown. "You cut open the bag?"

Before Harry could reply the man reached out one of his claw-like hands and grabbed at Harry's head-gear. It came away—and Harry was exposed to the full moonlight.

"The Englander boy!" snarled the Green Unknown. "Seize him; seize them both!"

The boys tried to make a bolt for it, but they had no chance. The hooded figures pounced upon them and they were held.

The Crucible!

IN spite of their desperate plight, Harry and Bottles were filled with amazement as they were led into that big wooden building—a modern factory.

For a factory it proved to be. Electric lights were glowing everywhere; men in overalls were at work, at benches, at lathes, and machinery was whirring.

Harry looked about him with quick, eager eyes. And when he saw a great crucible, filled with molten metal, he guessed something of the truth. Here, in this building, counterfeit coins were manufactured by the thousand!

Real metal—pure gold and silver—was used in the manufacture of the spurious coins, and so cleverly were they designed and made that it was impossible to tell them from the real thing. No need to manufacture these coins out of base metals, and thus court discovery, for all the gold and all the silver was stolen property.

Orders were given. The men were told to cease work, and they fled out. Only the hooded guards remained. By now the two boys had been bound with their hands behind them. Their ankles were bound, too.

"You will tell me how you came by the—er—costumes," said the Green Unknown curtly, facing the two boys.

"Your fellow vampires are unhurt," said Harry. "We left them in the gully—bound and gagged."

"You were hiding in the gully?" asked the other.

"No," said Harry promptly. "We were hiding in one of the woods, beyond."

"Professor Kingswood is still there?"

"No; you won't find Professor Kingswood," said Harry calmly. "He's far away by this time."

If possible, he wanted to put these rogues off the scent. He guessed that the Green Unknown was asking these questions to kill time. No doubt a man of greater authority had been sent for. And

Harry wanted to hold the mystery men in conversation.

Just before him a long flat leather belt took the driving power from an engine at the end of the shed to a great fly-wheel further down. By stretching his bound hands out—backwards—his wrists touched that moving leather belt.

He was glad when the hooded figures moved away and stood in consultation at the other end of the great workshop.

"Think they'll kill us, Master 'Arry?" came a whisper from Bottles.

"They won't if we have any luck," replied Harry softly. The flying leather belt was scraping against his bonds now, and grazing his skin, too. But he gritted his teeth, and pressed harder.

Snap! One of the cords parted, and with a sudden wrench Harry had his wrists free.

"Look out for the fire-works, Bottles!" he panted. Like a flash he brought his hands round, catching a glimpse of his bleeding wrists. Never for a second did he hesitate. Even as he hopped across to the great crucible, filled with molten metal, the hooded figures leapt.

"Stand back!" cried Harry. And as he shouted he dipped a flat-bottomed ladle into the molten metal and swung it round. The Green Unknown and the others backed away with hoarse cries.

"Shoot him!" gasped one of the men. But Harry was too quick. Reaching forward, he placed the brimming ladle on the flat, revolving belt. It was an inspiration—a brilliant stroke of strategy.

For the Green Unknown saw the terrible danger. That ladle, reaching the fly-wheel, would topple over, and splash its terrible contents all over the floor.

"Back—back!" shrieked the Green Unknown, in horror.

Thud! Thud!

Shots rang out, but Harry and Bottles flung themselves to the floor. Harry's knife was already out and open. He slashed through the cords which bound his ankles he slashed through his companion's bonds.

And while he was doing this the ladle reached the end of its journey. The crooks had dashed back to the end of the workshop. There came a crash as the ladle fell; the molten metal splashed hideously, and dense smoke arose from the wooden floor as it struck. Flames leapt.

"Thought that would happen!" rapped out Harry, his eyes glowing. The molten metal had spread all over the floor in a long stream, and flames were leaping up like a wall, dividing the workshop into two halves. The masked men were hidden behind the wall of flame.

"This way!" panted Harry. Like a monkey he swarmed up the machinery supports; he reached the metal girders which held the roof. Bottles came after him with equal agility.

Crash! With his elbow, Harry smashed the glass of the skylight. The next moment he was through, and crawling along the roof.

Bottles was soon by his side, and, together, they straddled the apex of the roof.

Harry was glowing with triumph. Whatever



For a moment their captors looked away—and Harry jerked a ladle of molten gold on to the revolving belt.

happened now, he had at least struck one deadly blow at this grim criminal organisation! He had destroyed their private mint!

Figures were running up from all directions, and the boys' hearts sank. They had been seen up there, on the roof.

"Ere we go!" gasped Bottles. "Look, Master 'Arry—rifles!"

Several of those hooded figures had brought rifles to their shoulders—and the muzzles were aimed straight at the two boys.

Then came the end of the world—at least, so it seemed to Harry and Bottles. For, right beneath

by the roof itself. And the wreckage, hurtling through the air, had fallen into the lake.

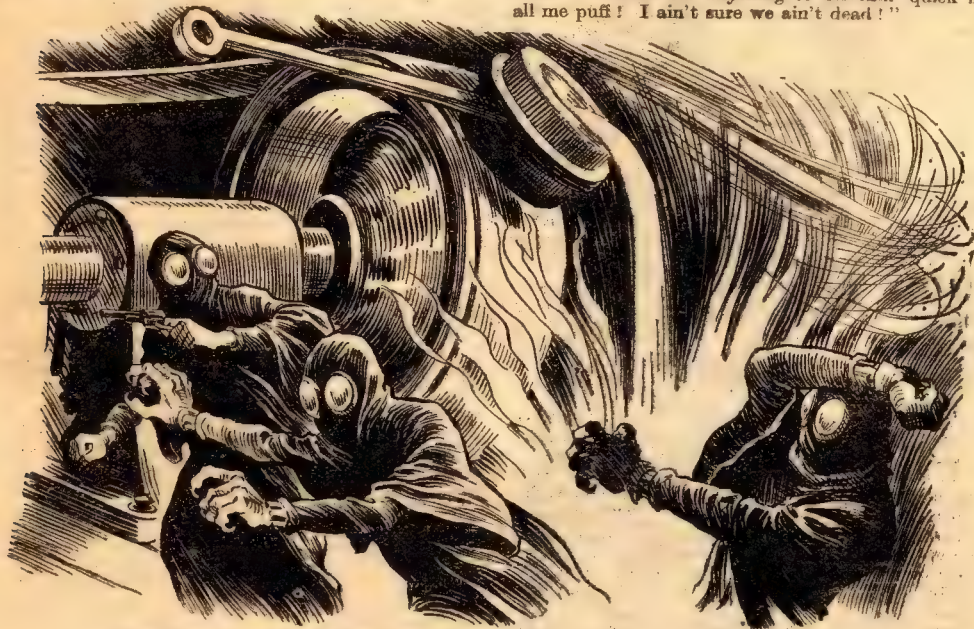
Thus they were saved—and saved in more than one sense. For their late captors had taken it for granted that both boys were blown to atoms in the explosion. There was no search for them.

"This way, Bottles—and swim!" hissed Harry.

"Swim as you've never swam before!"

"You got the right idea!" panted Bottles. They were both strong swimmers, and they struck out into the lake. Far too risky to go ashore anywhere on this side!

"You ain't 'arf a one!" said Bottles, as they swam. "Never see anything so bloomin' quick in all me puff! I ain't sure we ain't dead!"



A STREAM OF SLAUGHTER I—The ladle toppled over as it reached the flywheel, spilling the molten gold in streams over the floor. Flames shot up, and the masked men fled in all directions.

them a terrific explosion split the air like the knell of doom.

The sides of the workshop burst outwards in thousands of fragments—and the shattered roof, carrying the two boys with it, went hurtling skywards.

The Monster of the Lake.

AS the roof soared through the air it shed fragments; half of it simply disintegrated. The rest, heeling over, slewed round and went downwards with a kind of sickening glide.

Harry and Bottles scarcely remembered anything of that dread minute. They were stunned by the shock of the explosion. Both, in fact, were unconscious for some moments.

Spla-a-a-sh! The next thing Harry knew was that he was fighting for his life in icy-cold water! The shock restored him quickly to his wits. He found himself gulping in pure air, and, swimming feebly, he clutched at something close at hand.

"Bottles!" he gurgled.

Bottles it was. Dimly, they realised what had happened. Blown skywards on that roof, they had been protected from the full force of the explosion

"We're alive, Bottles—and we've done a big thing," gloated Harry. "We've destroyed their counterfeit coin factory—their mint!"

They were feeling better now. The drumming in their heads was not so insistent; the hard swimming was warning them up. And by now they were practically in mid-lake.

"We're safe now," said Harry, exultantly. "They think we're dead, and—"

He broke off, the words choking in his throat. For, suddenly, something cold and slimy and horrible had clutched at one of his legs. And at the same instant a black, shapeless monstrosity had broken the surface near by.

"Master 'Arry!" gasped Bottles. "There's—there's something—'Ere, 'elp! It's got me!"

Horried beyond measure, they fought for their lives. Tentacles came through the water, gripping their legs, their arms, their bodies.

"It's got me—I'm done—I'm finished!" sobbed Bottles. "Oh, there's one o' them feelers round me neck—"

He was dragged under, and at the same second

(Continued on page 36.)



**YOU'LL
BE
HELD
TENSE IN
THE GRIP
OF MIGHTY
THRILLS
AS YOU
READ THIS
GIGANTIC
COMPLETE
SCIENCE
TALE.**

Terror In Africa.

THE Kronzsmacs were before their time. They came as a terror to civilisation when first they appeared rushing madly through the Big Woods, Great black demons with glowing red eyes like search-lights. Metal men.

The Kronzsmacs, bent upon the destruction of a city!

It was not the doing of Professor Kronz, their inventor. Certainly not of Ned Haines, his boy pal.

Under his granite composition, the Professor was a kindly man. But formerly he had picked terrible associates . . . One . . . Gorgvalshen . . .

Gorgvalshen at least realised what might be done with the invincible iron army . . . the looting of cities. And he had a more powerful figure behind him in Felix Raby—white-faced, vulturine; immensely cruel—whose dreams were larger. He dreamt of becoming Emperor of the world.

And these two got hold of the great control tower of the iron men.

Ned Haines outwitted them. He regained control

**A Curtain Raised On
Marvels in This Grand
Yarn of**

THE IRON HOST IN AFRICA.

**Professor Kronz, Ned
Haines and Their Iron
Army Fighting a Super
Science Crook, Armed
with Death Rays, in
the Dark Continent.**

of the great army, and used them in a great public service.

But the civic authorities were still suspicious. They had tasted of the power these iron men wielded, and they were taking no risks.

It was intimated to the Professor at length that a determined warfare would be waged against the Kronzsmacs, unless they left the country.

The Professor acceded to the terms laid down. And so in great packing cases aboard two steamships the Kronzsmacs and the marvellous power tower, with Ned and the Professor, came to Africa.

To Mombasa, where lorries hauled them long miles through the bush roads toward the river Tana.

"To the Mountains of the Moon—that's where we're going, lad," the Professor whispered one night as they camped out under the silvery moonlight of the mysterious hinterland of the Congo.

"You've heard of them? They've never been properly explored. Yet I have journeyed part of the way with Doctor Harrison, and you won't believe what I saw."

He paused and drew a sharp breath, looking around him.

"I saw it with my own eyes," he said as though he anticipated contradiction. "Scaly like a dragon. Eyes like headlights, and jaws twice as big as any shark. A neck as long as one of those giraffes we've seen. The prints it made in the mud by the geysers were as big as a table top. Like a duck's, webbed with marks where the big claws went in deep. You could hear it bellow like thunder and rumble in its belly like a volcano."

Ned's head was in a whirl that night as the Professor talked. But with the coming of the hot sunlight he was inclined to put this prehistoric monster down to fever.

"We're going to the Mountains of the Moon, lad, to explore . . . to see the monsters—something no man's ever seen, perhaps . . . Yes, and to find Doctor Harrison."

Ned echoed his words sharply: "Doctor Harrison?"

"We came here into the heart of Africa to plot and work, Doctor Harrison and I. I evolved the Kronzsmacs, and he—he discovered the Kangan rays."

Something in the Professor's manner tore Ned's heart with a sudden, awful fear.

"You have not heard of them," the Professor said.

"They are discoveries further to Professor Rontgen's X-rays. These Kangen rays can penetrate fifteen feet of metal." The Professor leant forward suddenly with a wild desperation in his eyes.

"Harrison has invented the machine that collects these rays," he breathed fearfully. "A series of mirrors and aluminium boxes. A devilish ray gun that could shatter and destroy Mount Kenia there."

Ned stood up, fear running through him—hurting him like a corporate thing.

"They—he—will he do this—?" Ned stammered.

"He is mad with dreams of power," Professor Kronz answered gravely. "He will do it, Ned, unless we, with the Kronzsmacs stop him. We have work to do here in Africa. I have learnt that Harrison's Kangen gun is almost ready."

"We've got to smash it, before he can use it as a terrible weapon against the world! And we may be followed, even out here in Central Africa."

The white-haired man peered around him agitatedly as he spoke. Brilliant moonlight bathed the jungle and played upon the broad surface of the Tana river, turning it to a path of quicksilver. It was a typical African night—beautiful, yet eerie—playing upon the nerves of the Professor and the lad.

Ned Haines stared a moment at Professor Kronz.

"You think Gervalsen or Raby could follow us out here? . . . They'd better not interfere with us!" he snapped with spirit, "or we'll give 'em a taste of what the Kronzsmacs can do."

Professor Kronz made his way towards a vast number of huge packing-cases that carpeted a nearby nullah, or dried water gulch where they had been camping. In these were concealed the Kronzsmacs, the Professor's amazing contribution to science.

Ned Haines looked towards the broad silver Tana river. Then he gave a great start—a great cry—with a feeling of icy chill running through him as he caught sight of a figure standing on a little knoll, intently watching him.

A warrior of the Massai tribe. Enormously tall, with a six-foot broad-bladed assegai and long, painted shield, he was a sight to affright the senses.

Even as Ned stood transfixed a moment, the warrior vanished on the other side of the slope.

"That's torn it," thought Ned. He cried a warning to the Professor.

"Professor Kronz! Savages attacking! Quick!"

As the shout left his lips, the young adventurer saw the befeathered savages—a great horde of them, encircling him and the Professor, creeping from bush to bush, like ghosts.

Their long spears, their faces like fiends, their huge limbs—all made their imprint on Ned's nerves. He commenced running for a strange apparatus, standing on the summit of the water track. It was the power tower, controlling the iron men boarded up in the packing cases.

But though he travelled at speed for it, Ned realised with a thrill of horror that he would never reach it in time.

With a wild scream the foremost savage sprang upon him, spear lifted to hurl.

In a flash the boy saw his axe on the ground, and dived for it—a big axe with which he had been chopping wood but half-an-hour previously.

That action probably saved his life for the time being, for there was a zip as the great spear snored over his head. And Ned turned at bay, with the axe in his hands.

He was an axeman, a woodsman born. Ducking, Ned dashed in, and the great axe swung in a silver, flashing circle around his head.

In those first few seconds it did awful execution. The lad was berserk for a moment, fighting as a primitive man might have done—as these savages were doing. It was a great and grim fight, and for a few moments he seemed to bear a charmed life as the savages fell before him with fearful cries.

He saw that the Professor had come up with pipe fuming between his teeth, only to be swiftly seized and borne down into the pit by the madly shouting savages. They were going to spear him there . . . to death . . . amongst his own metal men who might save him.

A fearful cry exploded from Ned's throat. Somehow he must save the Professor—he must get to the control tower. He flung the red axe with all his strength, and it sliced a savage's head from his shoulders as he turned and ran.

Half-a-dozen long, keen-bladed spears whistled



BLACK AND WHITE GIANTS' BATTLE.—Ned swung the axe about him fiercely, striving to break a way through the ranks of the savages to the control tower of the Kronzsmacs.

over his shoulder. He swerved, ducked and dodged. And then he reached the control tower.

He slammed the heavy door on the first of his pursuers, and as he darted up the iron steps to the control room, Ned wondered whether the iron men would respond to the power, cased up as they were.

Hastily he seated himself at the controls, and turned on the switch that animated those iron giants.

Would they respond? Would the thought transference waves flow through those thick cases? Ned feverishly turned switches, and his hands operated the keys, directing the metal men by radio.

For a second nothing happened. And then suddenly a great shout of triumph and joy burst from his lips.

From the height of the control tower he could see right down into the nullah. The Kronzsmacs had responded—nobly.

The stout packing cases split and shattered to great blows. The boards flew like spray. And there appeared black monsters with eyes glaring, lighting the whole scene in a ruddy glow.

Mefal men, imbued with fierce life. Springing with the fearsome speed of mighty jungle animals making a kill. They were doing their job—doing it terribly. Ned in the heat of the moment had directed through the radio controls that no quarter was to be shown the savages. And none was.

The negroes were seized up, whirled round and thrown yards by the mighty metal men. It was a grim and awful massacre.

The savages ran in sheer terror and panic. After them thundered the metal men, a great black army of demons, overtaking them, trampling them under foot. Until Ned, seized with a sudden horror and remorse, radio-directed them to stop.

Some escaped, but not many out of that proud army that had attacked Ned and the Professor.

The Professor! What of him? Ned peered into the hollow, and saw that the Professor was lying apparently wounded, but alive, for he stirred.

And then it came. A flash—a great flash like the sudden bursting of a thunderstorm. And it was accompanied by the electric crackle and hiss that is heard when forked lightning tears amongst low overhanging clouds.

The effect was just like forked lightning, save that it ran along the ground, appearing to strike into the hollow of the dried water-track.

In a moment it was gone again. Ned peered in terror. Now there was no sign of the Professor, only an apparently bottomless hole in the water-track—a pit from which smoke was rising densely.

With rising horror Ned radio-directed the iron

men, and in a great black body they plunged down into that pit.

Ned waited in doubt and fear. The Kangen gun! It had done its work, then, already. And that meant—

That enemies besides these savage blacks—white men—must be near.

Gorvalshen Hears the Secret.

NED suddenly heard himself cheering, shouting wildly with joy. They were bearing the Professor out of that smoking pit, held aloft—the



THE ROBOT'S RESCUE.—At Ned's direction the metal men went down into the pit, to reappear carrying the Professor with them.

iron men. Once again they had proved their worth to Ned. And Ned leapt down the iron staircase to meet the Professor, satisfied that for the nonce there was no danger.

And in that the lad made his great mistake. The metal men, marvellous though they were, were incapable of showing any initiative or enterprise of their own. What they were directed to do through the radio controls they did—nothing more.

They had been directed to wipe out all the savages they saw—black, befeathered men. But there was one who lurked among the bushes who was white, or nearly so. Gorvalshen, the beast-man with the great battered face and pig-like eyes glowing with hatred!

And now Gorvalshen watched, and he saw the Professor borne up to Ned. He saw the iron men lay the great inventor tenderly down, and saw Ned bending anxiously over him.

"Professor—are you hurt?" the lad cried.

Professor Kronz rose, staggering. But an amazing vitality gleamed in his eyes.

"They came in time, Ned—just in time, the iron men!" he panted. "I wore a magnetic belt that I invented as a foil against the Kangen gun—for it was that that destroyed the pit—but the gases nearly asphyxiated me. Thank Heaven! Ned, come inside . . . I must talk."

Ned helped him into the control tower. "Come, we must seek for our enemies on the television," panted the Professor.

He seated himself at a great screen in the control tower, which at a touch of his fingers on the switches

flared to a brilliant shimmering light. And pictures of the surrounding jungle began to appear on that screen as the Professor turned the switches and sought for the view all around. But no sign of Gorvalshen or any other enemy.

And for a very good reason. He was in the control tower itself. He had crept in, seizing his opportunity. There was an awful grin on his battered face as he slowly climbed the twisting iron staircase to the upper control tower. His ears were attuned to listen.

"No sign of anyone," Ned said in a bated voice. Suddenly there was a mighty crackling in the control tower, silence for a moment, and then a giant voice blaring.

"Professor Kronz, I'm going to blow your Kronzmaes to nothing with my Kangen rays. And you as well. This is Doctor Harrison speaking, as you may guess."

Professor Kronz and Ned stood as if transfixed.

"He dare not do it—he wants the Kronzmaes," muttered the Professor, white-faced. But neither he nor Ned looked behind. Else they would have seen Gorvalshen creeping, step by step nearer, staring at the shimmering television screen, now vacant of any picture.

The mad dreamer miles away broke into a hoarse laugh, and his giant voice commenced blaring again.

"I want the Kronzmaes for my scheme of world conquest. But I can destroy your army, Professor—without a quail—and build another.

"I know where you have hidden the secret plans of your invention, and I am on my way to get them—now," shouted the harsh voice triumphantly. "Professor, you are too far away—powerless to move—to prevent me."

"Great heavens!" gasped the Professor. "The

plans of the metal men must not get into that villain's hands!"

"You have hidden them?" Ned asked hoarsely.

"Yes. How could the Doctor know? I went alone."

"There must be some way of finding out—making sure," Ned reminded him. "The television."

"A-ah!" The Professor bent eagerly to the apparatus, and turned switches. And now the scene on the shimmering screen was changed.

It was a great torrent between mountains that was pictured on the screen. Grey water surging in the depths of that canyon. A stone ledge over which the water washed. And to that stone ledge was made fast by a metal chain a box—a large black metal deed box.

"The plans are hidden in that box!" cried the Professor hoarsely. "In the waters of the Tana river, the nearest I ever got to the Mountains of the Moon."

Now one other person at least knew of the secret.

Gorvalshen, creeping behind with an awful grin on his battered face. That shouting voice through the loudspeaker had lured the Professor to locate the hiding-place of the plans on the television screen.

Gorvalshen was making to steal away, out of the control tower. He wanted to get away now with the news; to let Harrison and Raby know where the plans of the Kronzmaes were hidden. Then the Professor's army could be blown up with the Kangen gun.

But warned by some sudden instinct, Ned Haines looked round over his shoulder. Instantly Gorval-

(Continued on next page.)

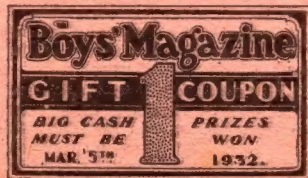
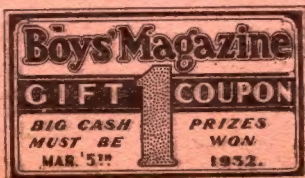
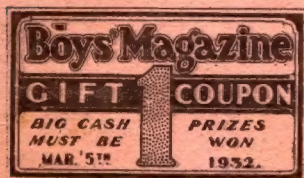
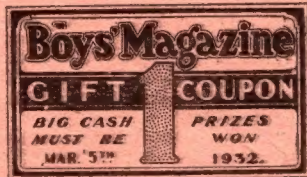
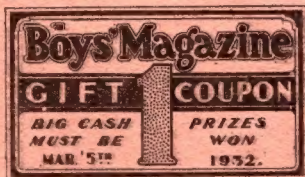
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THE IRON HOST IN AFRICA

(Continued from previous page.)

shen's attitude changed. Finding himself discovered, he rushed at the Professor and the boy.

Gorvalshen was a giant, possessed of a giant's strength. And there was a killer light in his eyes as he came at them.

In that moment of emergency, Ned's brain worked fast. He bent to the minor control board, which operated a single giant iron man—the Professor's experimental man—and hastily the lad manipulated the switches.

The iron man lay in the tower. And suddenly he sprang up like lightning as Ned radio-directed him, a crimson glare flowing from his eyes.

Gorvalshen screamed with terror. He had tasted the fearful strength of this iron man before. But the iron man had him in his great arms.

Ned and the Professor watched in dread fascination. Gorvalshen wrestled like a madman. But he could not break the grip of those iron arms, slowly squeezing him.

Actually Ned Haines had no intention of killing Gorvalshen through the iron man. He was directing the iron man to subdue Gorvalshen. And this the mechanical man was doing by squeezing the breath

from the giant's body. Until at last, as the grasp was loosed, Gorvalshen slumped to the floor, cowed and beaten.

"Now," Ned snapped. "We're going to keep you as hostage, Gorvalshen. If any of the Kronzsmacs—or if we are harmed—you'll be the first to die, Gorvalshen. Understand that!" he snapped.

Terror flared in the giant's eye. He knew his associates well enough to guess that the fact that he was held as hostage would not deter them from using the terrible Kangan gun. The only thing that would stay them was that they did not know where the plans were concealed—and they needed the Kronzsmacs badly in their scheme for world conquest.

Ned and the Professor talked it over together. They determined to go on. The battle must be fought, and the Kangan gun put out of action.

And at dawn they marched. Marched into the mountains, to meet Harrison and Raby, to meet the Kangan ray gun, perhaps to meet—Ned shuddered at the thought—the terrible prehistoric monsters the Professor had spoken of.

Look out soon for a further yarn of the iron Army in Africa. There is another brush with the terrible Dr. Harrison. Don't miss this stupendous yarn.

VAMPIRES OF TERRORLAND

(Continued from page 31.)

Harry knew that this must be the end. Helpless in the awful grip of a giant squid, he, too, was dragged under.

And then something black and huge came up from the depths, slicing into that lake monster and destroying it. Harry and Bottles, at the same moment, felt the tentacles relax. A fresh shock awaited them. Harry was the first to realise what had happened.

"Once before he had seen the strange submarine craft which moved about the lake! They both now clung to a low rail which surrounded the tiny deck. The vessel was awash and the boys, side by side, were lying against the metal plates, holding on to the rail.

"Out of the frying-pan into the fire!" muttered Harry. "Still, we're still alive—and that's something!"

He saw that the craft was making towards the shore. It was, in fact, going to that spot where the workshop was blazing. The boys were being taken right back to the place they had escaped from.

"What'll we do, Master 'Arry?" whispered Bottles. "We can't drop back into the lake, or them monsters—"

"Wait!" interrupted Harry, a sudden sharp note in his voice. There was a little conning-tower sticking up out of the centre of the deck. And now the metal lid rose on a hinge.

A man climbed through, and stepped down upon the deck. Like a panther Harry Tracey leapt.

Crash! His fist thudded into the man's face. With scarcely a sound the fellow toppled overboard, to splash into the water.

By now the little submarine had practically reached the bank. Another man came up through the conning-tower, and he was talking.

"—better both go ashore," he was saying. "The boat won't come to any harm, left by herself. Hallo! What the—"

Crash! Harry's fist did more good work. The second man went hurtling overboard—and now Harry was in possession of vital information. For he knew that there were no other men aboard the craft!

"Quick, Bottles!" he panted. "Follow me!" They heard the two crooks spluttering and shouting as they dragged themselves ashore. The two boys slithered into the conning-tower.

They found themselves in a tiny, electrically-lit cabin. There was a kind of dashboard, a steering-wheel like the controls of an electric motor-boat. He touched a switch, and there came an answering hum. The propeller churned, and a moment later the submarine was shooting out across the lake.

"We've done 'em!" shouted Harry gloatingly.

Across the lake they went—and Bottles made a glorious discovery. Not only did he find a tin of biscuits, but an enormous hunk of cheese and a great Thermos flask full of hot coffee. He even turned up a parcel of ham sandwiches—finding all of these in a little locker.

Evidently those two men were on for a long spell of duty, and, naturally, they had brought their supper with them.

The instant the submarine touched the bank, further up the lake, the two boys leapt ashore, carrying their precious spoils. They were well clear of pursuit now, and, running through the dense clumps of trees, dodging the bright patches of moonlight, they at length reached the great wall.

For youngsters of their agility, it was not a difficult climb. They reached the summit. They swarmed down the other side, using the creepers. Then on—on.

So, at last, they reached that gully once again; they crept along the ledge, and into the cave, where Professor Stirling awaited them. Their raid into Terrorland had been a great success, and they were safe again—with food and drink as a reward for their daring.

Don't miss the next yarn of this thrilling series, "The Unholy Holocaust!"